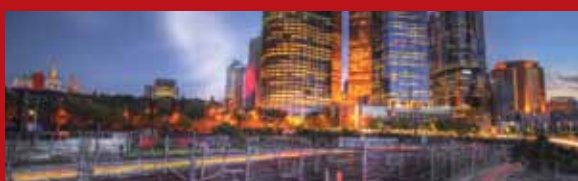




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MEASURES OF AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION: A CONVERSATION
WITH AUSTRALIANS ABOUT PROGRESS



MEASURES OF AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION: A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS ABOUT PROGRESS



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CONTENTS

PREFACE	7	4. AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS	53
INTRODUCTION	9	4.1 Background	53
Background	9	4.2 Submissions and contributions	53
Our approach	10	4.3 Other Australian government initiatives	60
Purpose of this publication	16	Spotlight: Submissions relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	65
Structure of the publication	16	Spotlight: Business Council of Australia	66
Spotlight: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	17	5. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES	67
SECTION ONE: CONSULTATION PROCESS		5.1 Background	67
1. SOCIAL MEDIA	19	5.2 Historical context	67
1.1 Background	19	5.3 A selection of international projects	69
1.2 Prominent Australians	21	5.4 Summary of themes and aspirations	79
1.3 MAP 2.0 blog	25	Spotlight: Australian Conservation Foundation	80
1.4 Other media	26	Spotlight: Voiceless	81
1.5 Themes – social media	27	SECTION TWO: CONSULTATION RESULTS	
Spotlight: Reconciliation Place	30	Introduction	83
Spotlight: Australian Council of Learned Academies	31	Structure of consultation results	84
2. EXPERT PANELS	33	Detailed consultation results	86
2.1 Background	33	Summary consultation results	100
2.2 Topic Advisory Panels	33	SECTION THREE: SUPPORTING MATERIAL	
2.3 The MAP forum	34	References	103
Spotlight: Green Building Council Australia	37	Abbreviations	106
3. STATE, TERRITORY AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS	39	List of figures	107
3.1 Background	39	APPENDICES	
3.2 State and territory capital workshops	39	A. TAP participants	108
3.3 State and territory plans	39	B. Regional office workshop comments	109
3.4 Local government	44	C. Findings of TAP1 and material provided to forum	117
3.5 Community indicator initiatives	46	D. A selection of government department mission statements	131
Spotlight: Garma Festival 2011	49	For more information	139
Spotlight: Griffith University workshop	50		
Spotlight: Arts Queensland	51		



Please note: This word cloud represents the range of ideas expressed during the MAP consultation. The size of the words represent how often they were raised.



MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

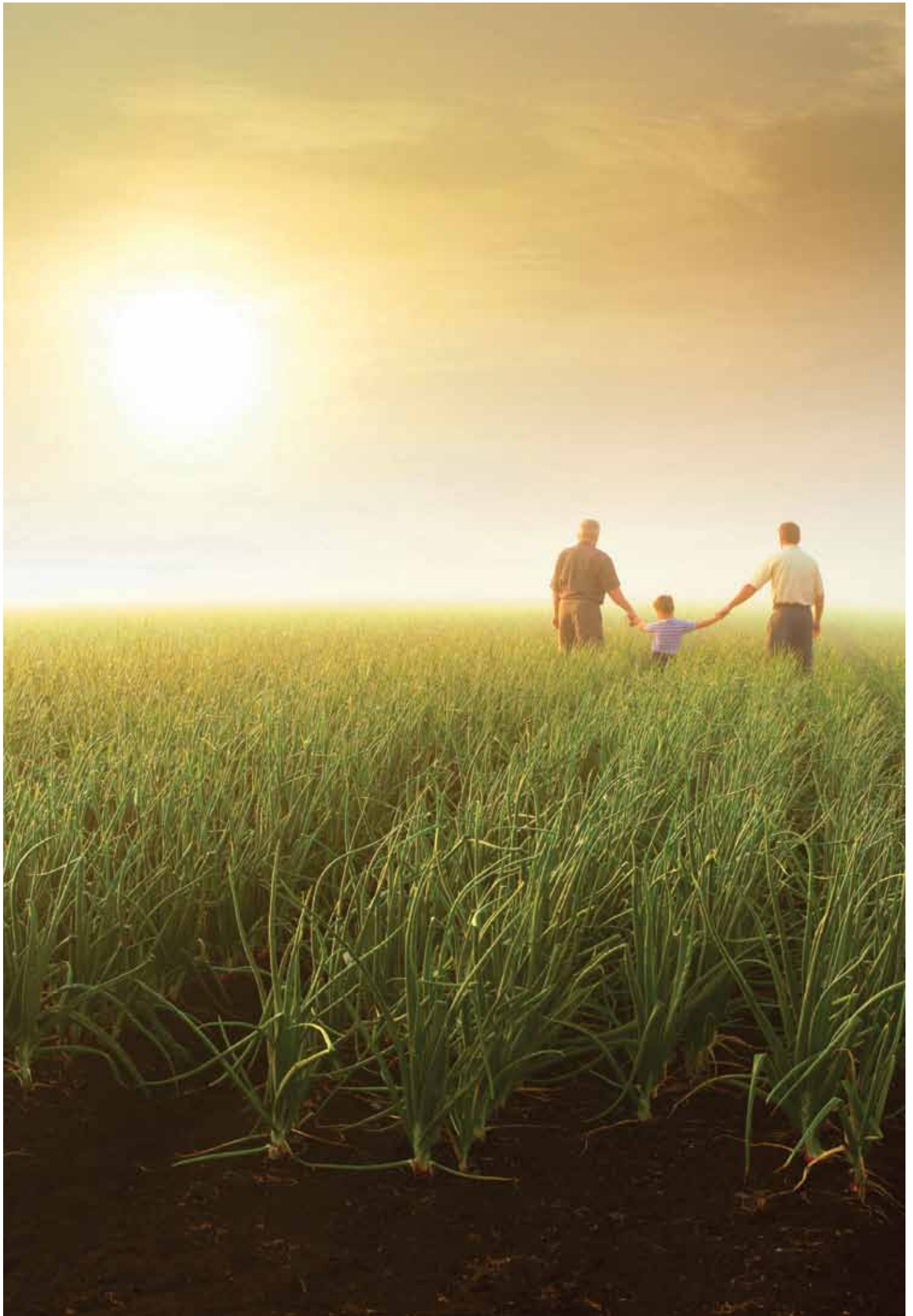
ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
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ABOUT PROGRESS

Suggestions, comments and ideas about the contents of this publication are welcome. Please contact us at: measuringprogress@abs.gov.au

or

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Please note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this publication may contain images or names of persons who are now deceased, which may cause distress.



PREFACE



Measuring progress – providing information about whether life is getting better – is perhaps the most important task a national statistical agency undertakes. Measuring progress has been a responsibility of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and its predecessors since colonial times. Then, the idea of progress and the measures required were somewhat simpler – wool exports and the size of the population, for instance. Over time, more complex measures were introduced, such as labour force measures and economic accounting, in response to social and economic disruption following the First and Second World Wars. More recently, global interest has focussed on measuring the social and environmental dimensions of progress; ensuring that official statistics measure what nations care about for national progress; and going beyond using Gross Domestic Product as the main indicator of progress.

A decade ago the ABS made a major contribution with the release of the first issue of Measures of Australia's Progress (ABS 2002). At that time, the Bulletin referred to Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) as a revolutionary set of indicators which provided great insights into how life is improving and at what rate. Ten years on, the ABS, guided by the MAP Expert Reference Group (ERG), has undertaken a national consultation to review MAP, ensuring it remains relevant to today's society – that we are measuring what Australian society cares about.

Proposing aspirations for national progress is the role of the Australian public, rather than that of the ABS. The role of the ABS has been to facilitate and synthesise the set of aspirational statements received from the consultation process. This consultation has therefore allowed the ABS to hear, listen and reflect on the aspirations that Australians hold for national progress.

This publication provides an account of this consultation; how it was run and the feedback that has been received. It highlights the ABS's use of social media to engage new audiences and provides a record of the broad consultation undertaken with individuals, organisations and governments across the nation. The publication also presents an overview of other key progress measurement initiatives, both national and international, and the aspirations that these projects articulate.

This publication, 'Measures of Australia's Progress – aspirations for our nation: a conversation with Australians about progress' provides an account of the aspirations that came from the consultation. The next phase of the MAP review will be to use these consultation results, together with expert statistical advice, to develop a refreshed set of indicators for the next generation of MAP. The aspirations of Australians will form the basis for the release of a new version of MAP in second half of 2013.

The ABS would like to thank everyone who participated in the MAP consultation. We appreciate the guidance, support and input we have received from the many individuals, groups and organisations who were involved. Their enthusiasm and engagement ensured a successful process and enhanced the findings of this publication.

As MAP is an evolving product, we welcome comments and suggestions on the contents of this publication. Please send any comments to the Director of Social and Progress Reporting at the following address:

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or measuringprogress@abs.gov.au

Brian Pink
Australian Statistician
November 2012

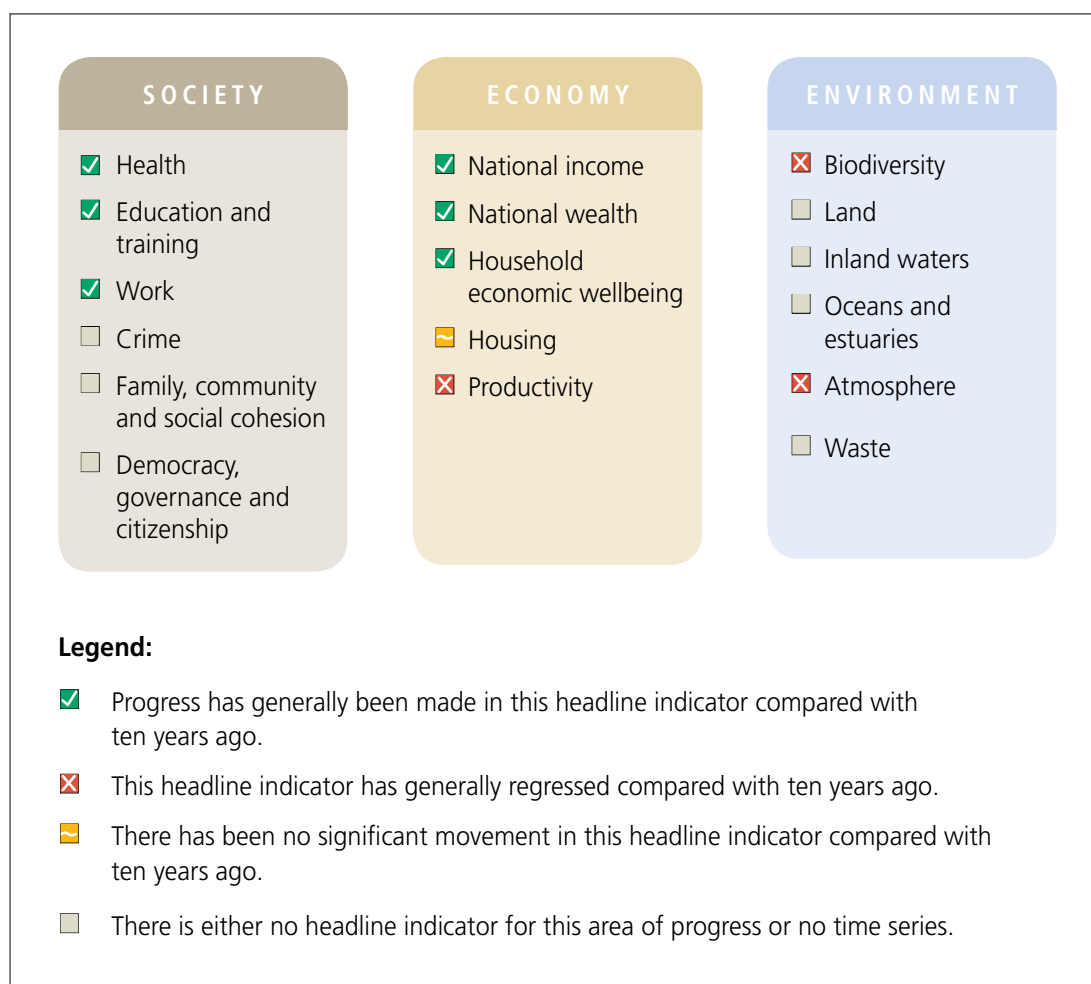


INTRODUCTION

Background – a review of Measures of Australia's Progress

Since it was first published in 2002, the Australian Bureau of Statistics' flagship publication, [Measures of Australia's Progress](#) (MAP), has been bringing together selected statistics about society, the economy and the environment to provide insight into national progress (ABS 2002). MAP is part of the ABS's commitment to providing high quality, objective and responsive data to assist informed decision making, research and discussion. It aims to assist Australians to answer the question, 'Is life in Australia getting better?'. It does so by showing whether progress is being made across the social, economic and environmental domains of life and by encouraging progress in each domain to be considered side by side.

Figure 1.1: MAP 2012 dashboard (see ABS 2012). Please visit: www.abs.gov.au/about/progress



Following the first release of MAP a decade ago, international and national interest in measuring societal progress in this integrated way has accelerated. Global conversations about defining and measuring progress were further encouraged in 2009 with the release of two notable reports: the '[Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress](#)' (Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi 2009) and the European Union's '[GDP and beyond: measuring progress in a changing world](#)' report (European Commission 2009). Both reports recommended a rethink of measurement systems and encouraged dialogue on what societies care about and whether these concerns are adequately addressed by official statistics.

During that year, the G20 Summit encouraged its member countries (including Australia) to develop measures that better take into account the social and environmental dimensions of economic development. In Australia, a 2020 Summit in 2008 reinforced the need for improved, broad indicators of progress.

Nationally, there has also been a surge of interest in broader measures of societal progress with many Australian communities and regions becoming interested in assessing the progress of their local area in this way. In addition, both state and federal government departments have seen the value of producing statistical profiles that reflect on social conditions, wellbeing and environmental sustainability, as well as economic growth.

In light of these developments, the ABS considered it was timely to review whether MAP is still measuring those aspects of life that matter most to Australians. In 2011-2012, we undertook a broad-ranging consultation that asked Australians 'What is important to you for national progress?' The feedback the ABS received formed the basis of the aspirational statements provided in Section Two of this publication. Throughout the ABS's conversations with individuals and organisations, many indicated support for the consultation process and the MAP product generally.

This publication, 'Measures of Australia's Progress – aspirations for our nation: a conversation with Australians about progress' provides an account of the consultation process and the aspirations that came from it. The next phase of the MAP review will be to use the consultation results, together with expert statistical advice, to develop a refreshed set of indicators for the next generation of MAP. A new version of MAP, based on the consultation results, will be released in the second half of 2013.

Our approach

The MAP Expert Reference Group

The ABS's approach to the MAP consultation has been guided and endorsed by a MAP Expert Reference Group (ERG). The ERG is chaired by the Australian Statistician, Brian Pink, and includes eminent representatives from business, community, research and government organisations (see figure 1.2). A similar group had provided broad direction and advice to the ABS for a lot of the time since MAP's inception. It was reconvened to guide the 2011-2012 consultation. The ERG has provided feedback to the ABS at each step of the consultation process and will continue to advise the ABS throughout the redevelopment of MAP 2013.

ERG advice on and endorsement of the consultation approach and model — particularly the idea of identifying Australian's aspirations for progress — has been critical to the success of the MAP consultation. The ERG members also directly participated in the consultation through attending and leading the MAP forum.

Current members

Brian Pink	Australian Statistician (Chair)
Bill Allen	Branch Head, Economic and Environment Statistics Group, ABS
David Borthwick	Ex Secretary, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
John Daley	Chief Executive Officer, Grattan Institute
Richard Eckersley	Independent Researcher; Director, Australia21 Ltd.
Dominic English	Executive Director, Strategy and Delivery Division, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Jenny Gordon	Principal Adviser Research, Productivity Commission
David Hedley	Senior Adviser, Economic Conditions & Outlook, Economic Policy Branch, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Tshibanda Gracia Ngoy	ERG Youth Representative, 2011 Young People's Human Rights Medallist and Welcome to Australia Ambassador
Rob Raether	Principal Adviser of Industry, Environment and Defence Division, The Treasury
Mike Salvaris	Adjunct Professor, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
Fiona Stanley	Research Professor, School of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Western Australia
Rob Ward	Strategy Council member of the Global Foundation

Previous members

(who provided advice on the 2011/12 MAP consultation)

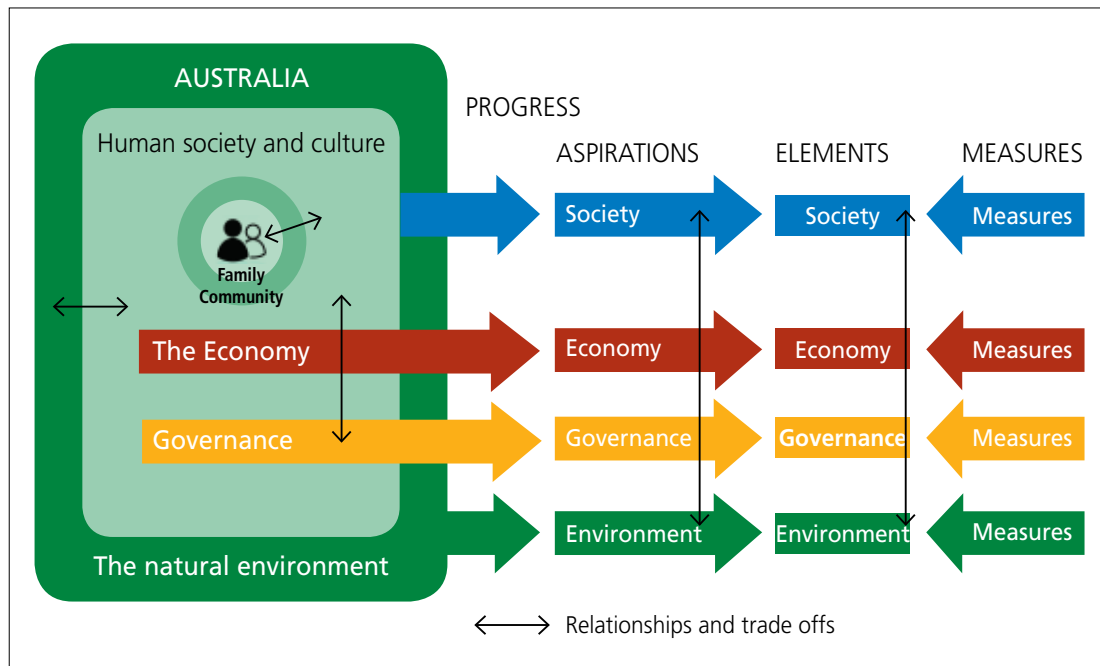
Subho Banerjee	former Executive Director, Strategy and Delivery Division, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Ben Rimmer	former Deputy Secretary, Strategic Policy & Implementation, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Jason Russo	former Branch Head, Economic Analysis and Reporting Branch, ABS
Ken Tallis	former Deputy Director, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Sue Vroombout	former General Manager, Commonwealth State Relations Division, The Treasury
Damien White	former Principal Adviser, Social Policy Division, The Treasury

Figure 1.2: MAP ERG membership list (appearing in alphabetic order).

The consultation model

The ABS began the consultation process by publishing an online feature article in MAP 2010 (launched at NatStats 2010), titled '[Future directions for measuring Australia's progress](#)' (ABS 2010). The article outlined the approach for the consultation, including a model to guide how the ABS planned to collect consultation feedback. That model (see figure 1.3) identified the broad aspects of Australian life the ABS was seeking feedback about: that is, society, the economy, the environment and a new area that the ABS had been encouraged to explore – governance.

Figure 1.3: MAP consultation model.



The consultation model shows the individuals, families and communities who make up society; the economic and governance systems that enable society to function; and the natural environment on which society depends.

The model seeks to show progress as the unambiguous movement of society in a positive direction – that is, an improvement. Importantly, this idea of improvement implies there are aspirations (or end points) in mind that society is progressing towards, and that these need to be defined in order to know whether progress is occurring.

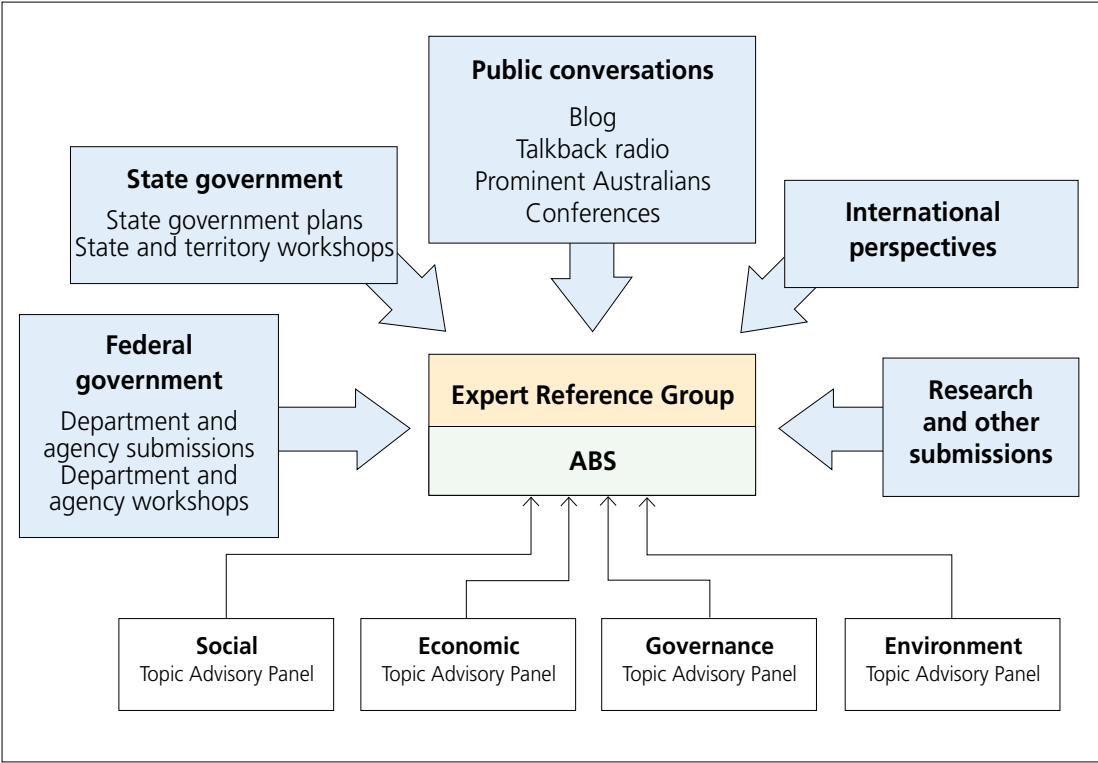
Conceptualising progress in this way clarifies that, in order to measure whether Australia is progressing, it is important to understand the broad aspirations Australians hold for their country. To this end, the consultation has focused on identifying those aspirations Australians hold for national progress in the four broad areas (i.e. society, economy, environment and governance).

The feature article (ABS 2010) also made it clear that proposing aspirations for national progress was the role of the Australian public; that is, the aspirations needed to reflect the values and interests of a wide range of Australians. The role of the ABS was to facilitate the discussion about progress, drawing out views and compiling them into a set of aspirational statements. In doing this, the ABS encouraged participants to focus on the ends (or aspirations), rather than the means of achieving these ends. In this way, broad aspirations, such as 'good health for all', could be agreed on without the conversation becoming focused on how the aspirations could be achieved – a process outside the role of the ABS and the review of MAP's statistical framework. Throughout the consultation process, the aspirations were further refined with a view to underpinning progress measures. The design of appropriate progress measures for the areas of life represented by the aspirations will be the focus of the next phase of the MAP redevelopment.

The consultation process and milestones

Eighteen months after the launch of the ABS’s consultation, this publication documents how the ABS gathered and compiled a diverse range of aspirations for progress from a broad range of Australians through a variety of communication avenues (see figure 1.4).

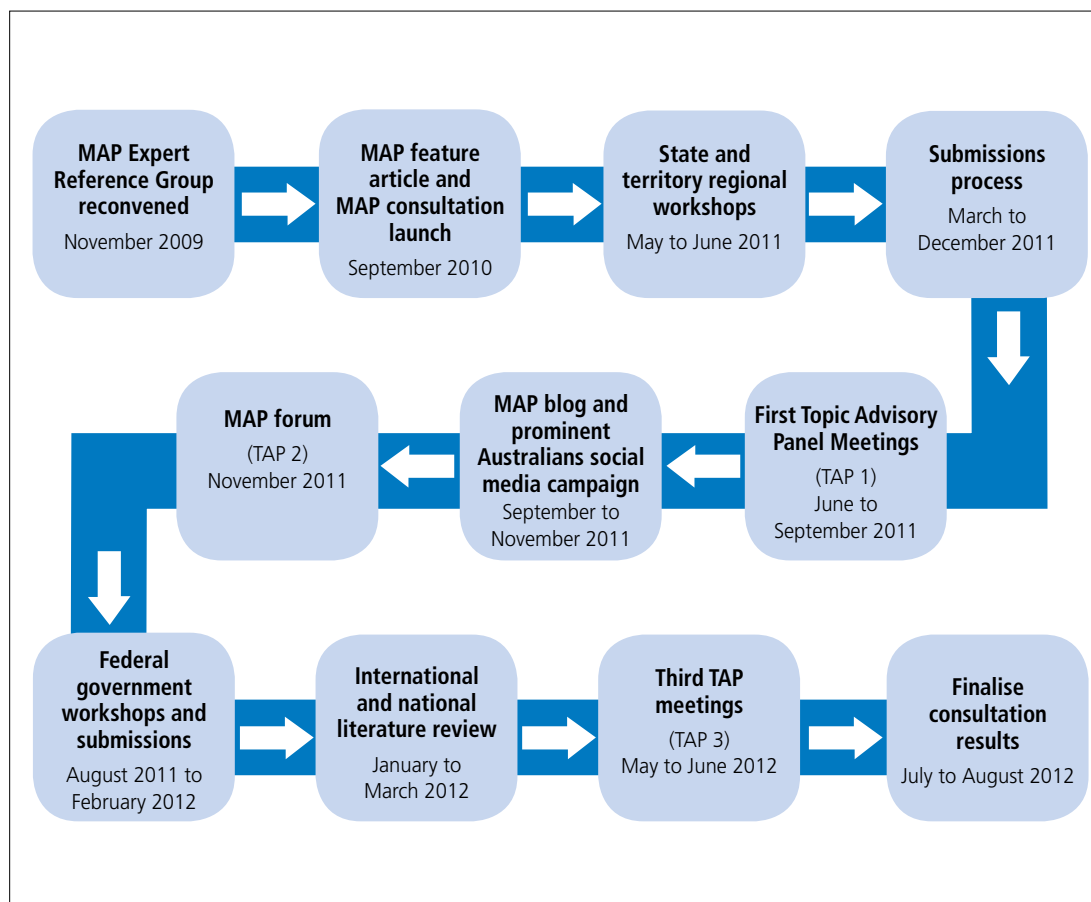
Figure 1.4: MAP consultation channels overview.



The viewpoints of Australians were initially gained through state-based workshops where people from state, local government and community organisations provided valuable source ideas for the consultation (see Chapter 3). Topic Advisory Panels were then engaged to provide expert guidance and analysis of the evolving aspirational ideas, which they did at several stages throughout the consultation process (see Chapter 2). The ABS asked a number of well-known Australians to share their personal views on progress and to launch a social media conversation with people who might not otherwise engage with statistics (see Chapter 1). The ABS looked at how state governments have articulated the aspirations of their constituents in state plans or similar documents (see Chapter 3); and met with and received the submissions of a number of federal government agencies (see Chapter 4). Submissions were invited and received from a broad range of organisations across government, business, community and academic sectors. In addition, the ABS has researched what international statistical agencies and other organisations have found when considering progress and related ideas (see Chapter 5). The major milestones of this extensive consultation process are shown on the following page (see figure 1.5).



Figure 1.5 MAP consultation process and milestones.



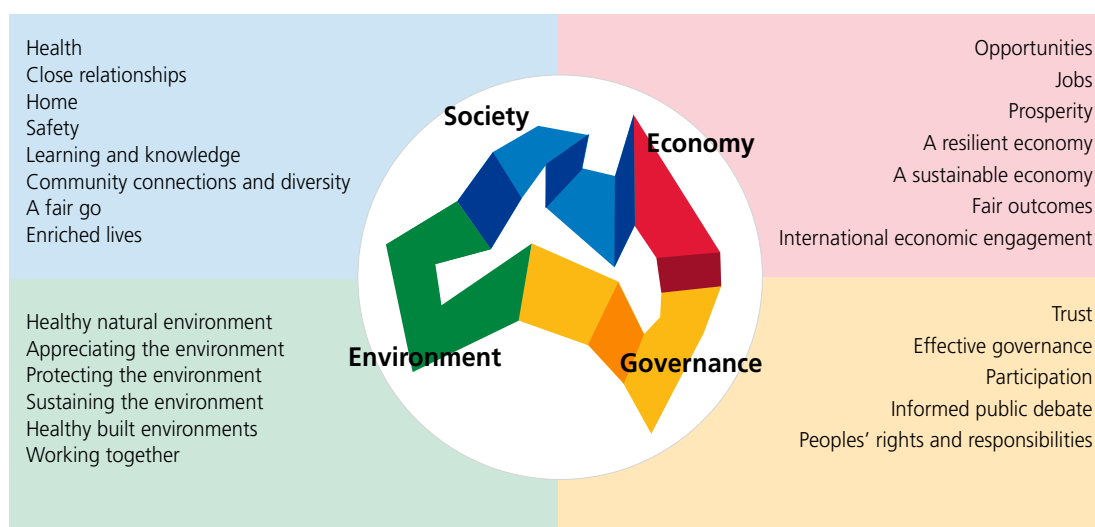
Feedback from the consultation

The ABS's method for bringing the consultation feedback together has been iterative. That is, following each phase of the consultation process, the ABS has undertaken a careful and methodical thematic analysis of the feedback received; drawing out and grouping common themes, articulating the important elements of those ideas and refining the aspirations and views expressed by participants. The result has been a set of aspirations for national progress that has evolved throughout the consultation process and the ABS hopes that these results will resonate with Australians.

As well as aspirations for national progress, the ABS has included in this publication a number of quotes from people or organisations who contributed to the MAP consultation. These comments give readers a flavour of the discussions that have taken place and an insight into both the complexities and common themes that have emerged from asking people 'what is important for national progress?' It should be noted that the quotations reflect the views of the individuals, and not necessarily the ABS or Australians more generally.

Figure 1.6 shows the overarching areas of life that Australians thought important for national progress. This preview of the results displays the domains and themes that emerged from the consultation process. For the complete set of results, please see Section Two of this document.

Figure 1.6: MAP consultation results – domains and themes



The purpose of this publication

This publication is designed to be useful in a range of ways. First, it documents the consultation process and findings, so the sources of input to the consultation are transparent to all Australians.

This publication also brings together important information about the activities of the many government and non-government organisations who are undertaking similar work. As such, the ABS hopes it provides a valuable starting point for those wanting to understand the scope and depth of current interest in developing indicators for progress and wellbeing. The publication may also support discussions about how these diverse progress initiatives might increasingly arrive at a greater coherence.

Finally, the ABS hopes this publication will provide further food for thought for readers in considering what areas of national life are most important in a national statistical product addressing progress. The ABS welcomes feedback, suggestions and further dialogue about MAP, as it is a product that continues to evolve over time as Australian society changes.

Structure of the publication

This publication is divided into three sections:

- **Section one** contains an overview of the consultation process. Each chapter in this section reviews a different channel of input into the consultation.

Each chapter provides some background and broadly describes the process undertaken to capture the views presented in the chapter. The chapters highlight relevant or illustrative projects and draw out common or notable themes. The chapters include a selection of verbatim comments from participants, to give a flavour of the nature of the feedback received.

In addition, this section includes consultation spotlights. These highlight the diversity of views raised by a wide range of organisations.

- **Section two** of the publication draws all the consultation information together, setting out a list of aspirations reflecting the views of Australians on national progress. It sets out the aspiration statements, associated elements and a short description that clarifies the ideas expressed. The descriptions also aims to give a sense of how the aspiration statements evolved.
- **Section three** contains supporting documentation for the publication. Here, in the interest of transparency, we have listed relevant documents and other material that may be of interest. This section also provides references for material used in the publication.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

In the feature article 'Future directions for measuring Australia's progress' (ABS 2010), the ABS acknowledged the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to which Australia is a signatory. Among other things, this Declaration says indigenous people have the right to have their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations appropriately reflected in public information. It also recognises that indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contribute to sustainable management of the environment.

As well as ensuring that a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives were included on its expert panels (see Appendix A), the ABS welcomed submissions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals. Issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were also often mentioned by non-Indigenous Australians as being important to national progress, particularly in regards to the equitable distribution of opportunities, and where national progress was linked to the wellbeing of the nation's least well off. People also spoke about the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as well as traditional environmental practices and land management.

The themes that arise in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and that are expressed so vividly in some of the quotes in this publication were also found to resonate with other groups in the Australian community.

There is a great diversity of views held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in regards to the nation's progress. The suggestions presented by the ABS cover just some of these aspirations and have been drawn from the MAP consultation process and other relevant sources.

Church at Ugar Island





SECTION ONE

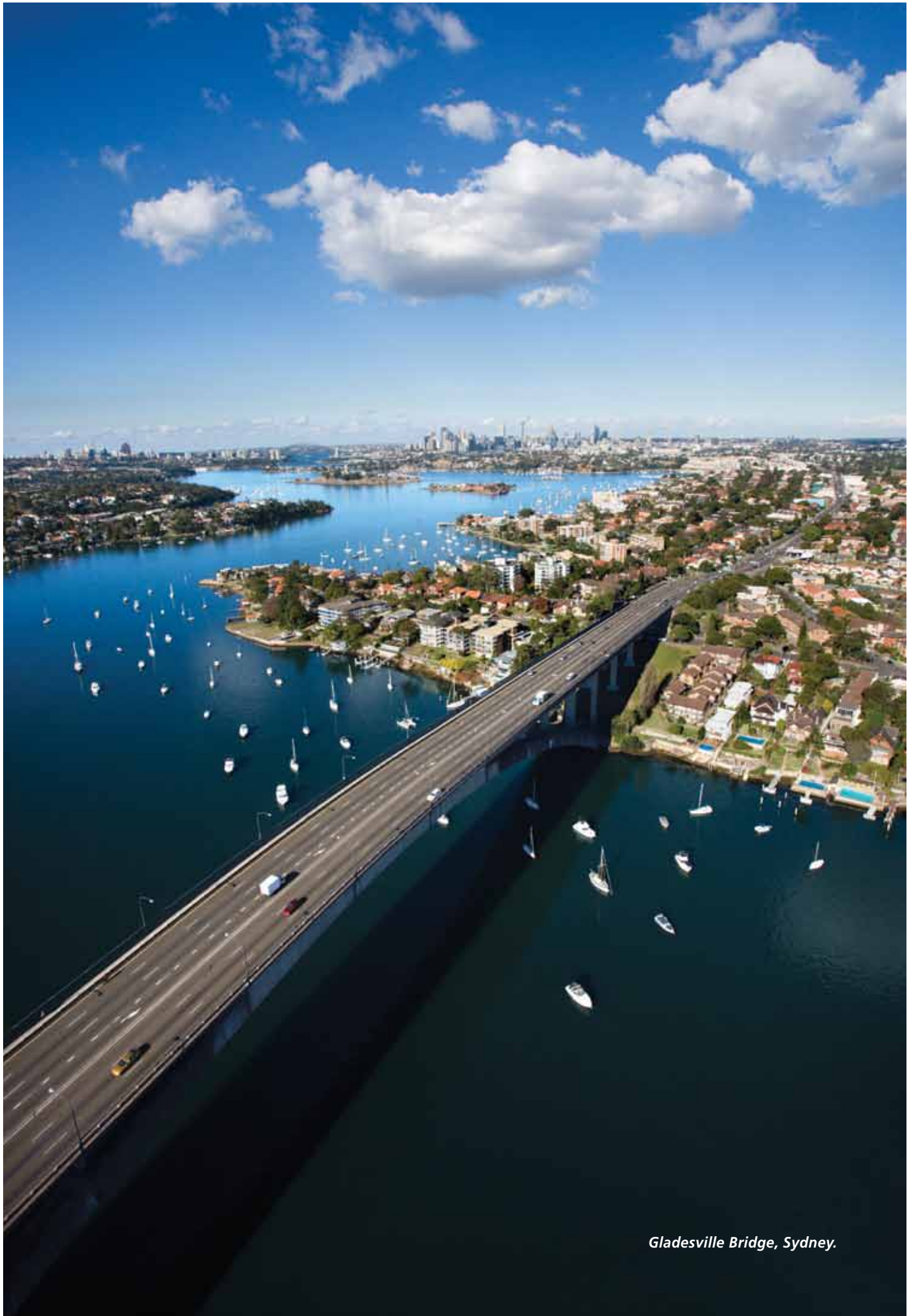
Consultation process

1.1 Background

As part of the MAP consultation, the ABS carried out a social media campaign. The aim of the campaign was to engage people who might not otherwise be engaged in the ABS and its activities, such as younger people or those who do not regularly use ABS statistics. This was a new approach for the ABS, as its consultations often naturally focus on the statistical needs of those who regularly use national statistics. However, in the case of the MAP consultation, the ABS aimed to invite contributions from as broad a range of the Australian public as possible.

There were several strands to the campaign, each aimed at engaging with the public and hearing what they had to say about what matters to them. The ABS approached a range of well-known Australians to participate in order to attract and encourage people to join in. The ABS operated a MAP 2.0 blog from the ABS website, and the ABS participated in radio programs where listeners could either phone in with their views, or contribute to the Facebook pages and blogs of the radio programs.

This chapter details aspects of the social media campaign. It presents contributions made by prominent Australians and comments received from the public through the MAP 2.0 blog and other media. The chapter then summarises the common themes and aspirations articulated throughout the campaign.



Gladesville Bridge, Sydney.

1.2 Prominent Australians

In order to generate interest in the MAP consultation and the MAP 2.0 Blog, the ABS invited several prominent Australians to write about or record their thoughts on Australia's progress. The following individuals contributed (in alphabetical order):

- Richard Aedy (former host of Life Matters – ABC Radio National);
- Eva Cox AO (social commentator);
- Mark Donaldson, VC (Australian soldier – awarded the VC in 2009);
- Richard Eckersley (researcher on population wellbeing);
- Lauren Jackson (professional basketball player);
- Dick Smith AO (entrepreneur); and
- Michael Stutchbury (former economics editor of The Australian).

These well-known Australians contributed not only by generating interest in the consultation, but also through the comments they made about Australia's progress. Their contributions are summarised below – their full contributions are available at the MAP 2.0 blog:

<http://blog.abs.gov.au/blog/mapblog2010.nsf>

Figure 2.1: Lauren Jackson – prominent Australian contributor.

Image supplied by the Canberra Times



Richard Aedy

Richard Aedy is a notable Australian journalist, radio presenter and media personality. As a journalist, he has covered a range of topics across science, crime, aviation, industrial affairs, health, technology, education, economics, epidemiology, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, social change, the media and contemporary Australian life.

In his contribution to MAP, Richard Aedy talked about many aspects of Australian life, from education, transport and cultural openness, to the challenges posed by climate change and the value of technology. He touched on the difficult experiences people may face in their lives; and spoke about the positive cultural change he has observed around interpersonal relationships; his own experience of fatherhood; and the complexity facing young people.

'It's clear that people are the greatest of all resources ... Nobody should leave Year 12, including kids who are planning to go into trades ... because all of them are growing up into a world that requires more understanding of complexity.'

Eva Cox, AO

Eva Cox is an Australian writer, feminist, activist and social commentator. Her areas of interest have included women's rights, civil society and social and ethical business practice. She was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia in 1995 for her services to women's welfare.

Eva Cox discussed the importance of relationships, community interactions and other non-material aspects of life. These include how people feel, how they interact with one another and their control over life decisions. She argued that an over-emphasis on monetary exchange has led to an undervaluing of family, caring and community. She said increasing our understanding of the importance of social connections also contributes to a wider appreciation of the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' views on land, culture and relationships.

'Without wanting to turn back the digital clock, I suggest that the quality of our social bonds need to be included in any measures of progress, because they are the basis for trust relationships that make the social (and economic) possible. These are the centre of what makes human society.'

Mark Donaldson, VC

Mark Donaldson is a corporal in the Australian Army. For his gallantry and courage in Afghanistan in 2008, he was awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia. In 2010, he was named Young Australian of the Year.

Mark Donaldson spoke about the idea of national progress as understanding where we want to be in the future, rather than focusing on short term goals. He felt it was important to aspire to physical and mental health, as these equip people to make positive changes in their lives and in society. He also emphasised the value of helping not only individuals to succeed, but also groups and communities, and of investing in young people, particularly in the area of education.

'[Progress means] where we were and where we are now, but probably more importantly where we are going to be in the future; not just in the prosperity of the country but across all the facets of Australian life... I think to be well equipped, both mentally and physically, and focusing on the future, as opposed to the instant gratification of the present would be an important aspiration.'

Richard Eckersley

Richard Eckersley is an eminent social researcher and writer. Influenced by his travels across Europe, Africa and Asia, Richard Eckersley has written about national progress, human development, sustainability, culture, health and wellbeing.

In his contribution to MAP, Richard Eckersley spoke about the wellbeing of young people and was concerned about the 'sexualisation, "adulthoodification" and commodification of childhood'. Richard Eckersley noted a decline in the quality of life of young Australians, pointing to rising rates of diabetes and mental health disorders among this group as issues of concern. Richard Eckersley argues that improving the way we measure progress can help change this situation.

'Rather than taking the prize when it comes to material progress as we pursue it, [young people] are paying the price. This price goes beyond the future impacts of climate change and other threats. It is not a question of discounting future costs against present benefits; the price is already being paid. If young people's health and wellbeing are not improving, it is hard to argue that life overall is getting better.'

23

Lauren Jackson

Lauren Jackson is an internationally acclaimed Australian basketball player. She has played in four Olympic Games with the Australian Opals (captaining them in 2008 and 2012), and in national basketball leagues in the United States of America, South Korea and Russia.

Lauren Jackson's contribution to MAP focused on the importance of relationships and social harmony. She talked about how a supportive family can help people achieve and succeed in life. She noted that through learning about Australia's history and participating in sports people can develop a greater awareness of diversity and learn to value and create a supportive society. She also said that she would like to see more unity and acceptance of difference; an Australia where people are able to work and live together peacefully.

'Having a good family environment where you are really supported and able to grow up in an environment that allows you to be who you want to be; and where you have the resources for education. I think that's the most important thing really.'

Dick Smith, AO

Dick Smith is an Australian entrepreneur, businessman, aviator and political activist who has contributed to Australian life in many ways. He was selected as Australian of the Year in 1986, and in 1999 was awarded Officer of the Order of Australia for his services to the community, charity and business.

Dick Smith said that he, like many others, had previously understood progress in terms of Gross Domestic Product. He said that this present economic system, which requires perpetual growth in the use of resources and energy, is not sustainable. He described the importance of other factors, such as quality of life, environmental sustainability and efficiency. He thought that these could be achieved through improved waste management, planned reduction of working hours and stabilising population growth. He expressed faith in the resourcefulness of the capitalist system to encompass such changes within fair government regulation.

'Just as capitalism has coped with laws on environment... I see we could have sustainability laws. So nothing could be marketed, could be sold, unless it's produced sustainably ... as long as there is an even playing field for capitalism, which is an incredibly versatile system.'

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ABOUT PROGRESS

Michael Stutchbury

Michael Stutchbury is a respected journalist and economic editor, with over 25 years' experience examining economic and corporate issues in print and other media.

Michael Stutchbury said that Australia had become one of the world's richest nations; the truly Lucky Country. While this demonstrates Australia's progress, he also called for sustained economic prosperity beyond the bounty created by the mining boom and Chinese investment, and in the face of inevitable global change. He argued that to achieve this sustained progress, Australians will need to be open to the opportunities that come with change to industries, regions or professions.

'Restructuring the economy toward its most profitable pursuits will make Australians richer. And richer Australians will spend more on all sorts of services, from entertainment and travel to better health care in their old age and educating their kids at the world's top schools. To make the most of these opportunities, however, we need to better understand, better measure and be more open to them.'



1.3 MAP 2.0 blog

The [MAP 2.0 Blog](#) (the ABS blog set up as part of the consultation process) was the main social media platform used during the consultation. The blog provided a platform where the ABS published short posts and responded to comments provided by members of the public. Other platforms such as the ABS [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages were used to direct people to the blog, where the ABS gathered and responded to comments. The blog allowed people to provide relatively detailed feedback if they wished. It was promoted publically with regular media releases, and followers of the ABS Facebook and Twitter pages were updated on blog activity. Media and other promotional activity focused on the contributions received from prominent Australians (see 1.3 Other media).

The ABS regularly posted content on the blog from its launch date on 29 August 2011 until 8 November 2011. This period of short, but intensive activity was aimed at generating interest, informing the public and encouraging participation. It was kept relatively short in order to concentrate efforts and maintain a high level of media attention and public interest.

12 Apostles, Victoria.



Keeping in mind that the MAP 2.0 Blog was a relatively new venture for the ABS, it was successful. From its launch to the end of December 2011, it received around 13,500 visitors, who made around 34,000 page visits and left around 116 comments.



*Figure 2.2: 'Can I quote you on that?' Judy Horacek.
© Judy Horacek 2008.
First Published in Walkley Magazine.*

1.4 Other media

The MAP consultation generated a range of media coverage, especially on the radio and in the newspapers. Most media attention was concentrated around the launch of the blog on 29 August 2011. Examples of the media coverage include:

- a talk-back session entitled 'Measuring Progress' on Life Matters, on ABC Radio National on 2 September 2011;
- an interview with Eva Cox on Morning Magazine on RTRfm in Perth and on Overnights on ABC Local Radio, on 6 and 7 October 2011, respectively;
- Fairfax Digital Regional Network newspapers asking readers to contribute stories and photographs about what progress means to them; and
- A post on the Facebook page of the Australian Youth Forum.

Comments generated from these talk-back sessions and made on the websites or Facebook pages of these radio programs, have been incorporated into this chapter with other comments from the social media activity from the consultation. In addition, the MAP 2.0 blog has also been linked to websites around the world including the OECD's [wikiprogress site](#).

Figure 2.3: The Australian Youth Forum Facebook page.



1.5 Themes – social media

'I think progress for Australia would possess some of the following things. An Australia that: strives for excellence in the arts; leads the world in economic reform; that is open, inclusive and fosters positive social relationships between its fellow citizens; that retains a healthy sense of humour and larrikin quality; that minimises and limits the role of bureaucracy where safely possible and where feasible; that ensures the natural environment for posterity; that where feasible and able, maintain and improve the living conditions of Australians (especially the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous); that never forgets its history both good and bad; and perhaps most importantly (and underpinning all of these things), adequately educates and equips its citizens with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate an increasingly mobile and complex society.' MJ

The following quotes were chosen from the broad range of comments gathered during the MAP social media campaign as being representative of the diverse views expressed. They have been grouped under common themes whose descriptions are based on the words of contributors. The comments were posted on the ABS blog.

Society

Equity – ensuring equal 'life opportunities' are available to all; reducing disadvantage, (especially disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples); managing disparity between the highest and lowest incomes; and fairness and tolerance towards people with different backgrounds, cultures or lifestyles.

'The concept of equity should perhaps be explored more broadly than income and wealth. What about equity of opportunity? I recognise this may cross over other themes, such as quality education and access to services, but I think we need to explore the possibility of measuring equity in terms of equality.' Amy

'Equity among all Australians (regardless of where they live) with indicators like education, access to social services, etc.' Ken

'Social justice – a country without massive inequalities of wealth distribution and "life opportunities". This means providing solid educational opportunities to all.' Heather

'Equity between haves and have nots.' Christine



Social relationships – feeling connected to family, friends and the broader community; caring for others and having time for relationships.

'We should also put more value on social capital — the ways people of all ages can contribute to making society better. We could start by looking outwards for the needs of others instead of focusing on just ourselves as individuals. I believe that a happier nation is one where people look out for each other and have strong connections to ensure they are more resilient.' Alice

'Healthy networks of friends, family and colleagues.' Ken

'How about progress as measured by the quality and maybe amount, of our care for others — both for other species that share this earth with us as well as for those humans who have so much less than us?' Gary

'A healthy (mind, body and soul) work-life balance.' Ken

Education – access and opportunity to undertake quality education.

'For me the number of people in public education matters. My grandparents didn't finish primary school, my parents didn't finish high school and I had the opportunity to go to university. It changed my life. It wasn't that I was smarter, it was because the access was better. I think if the numbers in public schools goes backwards then access to education will go backwards.' Jules

'Teacher/student ratios in public schools.' Julie

Health – especially addressing mental health issues and increasing life expectancy.

'Society focuses a lot on physical health without acknowledging the need for mental health support, it is widely seen as a weakness to suffer from mental health issues, and this creates a divide between the cause and treatment of it.' Sophie

Housing – increasing affordable housing and reducing homelessness.

'We need a society where there is an equal opportunity for all to satisfy basic human needs such as housing, and a safe environment to live, education, social and medical services.' Reet

Happiness – living a happy and fulfilling life.

'Progress is moving toward happiness universally.' — Comment made on an external forum

Valuing non-economic aspects of life – moving away from using economic measures and starting to track the progress of other valuable, non-economic aspects of life.

'We shouldn't use GDP to measure other things that are important to Australian life. If we have the ability to determine what they are, and how to measure them, then we should be doing this.' David



Economy

GDP

'GDP is a good measure of economic production and correlates well with many other areas that are considered important in Australian life, but it does not measure them... if we know what Australians consider to be the most important aspects of life, then we should strive to clearly measure these things directly.' David

Productivity

'Fostering of productive business and employment opportunities.' John

'Manufacturing needs to be lifted up as vital for growth. We seem to be more reliant on financial investment than on creating ways of earning. The more manufacturing the more jobs will be created.' Brian

Innovation

'And if growing productivity and jobs are goals - then diversity and room to move are needed for the innovations that make this possible.' Robyn

Wealth

'Wealth is another key indicator, and emphasis should be put on the household balance sheet estimates in the Australian National Accounts, and the movement in those.' Skipper

Environment

Many who contributed to the blog said it was important that Australia's economy and population grow sustainably, so the natural environment and its resources are protected for future generations. For some, this involved valuing our environment, using more renewable energy or living sustainably, while for others it involved slower population growth. Some advocated moving away from concentrating solely on economic growth towards broader concepts of progress, wellbeing and sustainability. A common theme was to avoid development that is at the expense of future generations.

'My main concern is sustainability and preserving the environment.' Janice

'The idea of increasing population growth to fuel economic growth ignores the natural limits of the environment in which we live. We need to first acknowledge then implement change to adapt more sustainable methods of energy production, food production and renewable based infrastructure (solar and wind).' Alice

'There is a need to adapt more sustainable methods of agriculture to sustain food production for the population without causing irreversible damage to our resources.' Sophie

Governance

Good governance – including protecting freedoms, effective leadership and effective regulation

'Freedom of thought and expression.' John

'A quality democracy with widespread community empowerment and involvement in local decision-making...' Craig

'One thing I find very important is freedom. Observing Australian society over the last ten years, I have seen progressively less freedom - and growing "social control". The reliance on rules, regulations and other top-down mandates grows, while flexibility, innovation and "room to move" decreases accordingly.' Robyn

'Elimination of corruption and favouritism.' John



Reconciliation Place, Canberra

Since its commissioning by the Commonwealth Government in 2000, Reconciliation Place in Canberra has brought together the shared aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians around the theme of reconciliation. The artworks featured in the space provide a journey through the history, current life and future aspirations of Australia. Some of the quotes featured in the artworks are included here as they echo many of the aspirations for Australian progress collected in the consultation.

'Life is about...getting up...helping each other and doing the best we can, to raise people out of their misery.' Dr Faith Bandler AM, interview with Robin Hughes, 1993

Figure 2.4: 'Women', Reconciliation Place. Reconciliation Place image supplied courtesy of the National Capital Authority. © Commonwealth Copyright. All rights reserved. Reconciliation Place is located in the Parliamentary Zone, Canberra.



'Take the responsibility and share parts of your country and our living cultures in a good way with fellow Australians and the rest of the world.' Robert Lee, 2003

Figure 2.5: 'Robert Lee', Reconciliation Place. Reconciliation Place image supplied courtesy of the National Capital Authority. © Commonwealth Copyright. All rights reserved. Reconciliation Place is located in the Parliamentary Zone, Canberra.



Australian Council of Learned Academies

There are four Australian Learned Academies – The Australian Academy of Science, The Australian Academy of Humanities, The Australian Academy of Social Sciences, and The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering. These four Academies cooperate through a national forum, formed in 1995. The Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) supports cooperative activities by the Academies and provides a common point of access to them. It promotes a unified national vision on issues of national significance, and aims to help overcome difficulties that may separate science, technology and engineering from the social sciences and the humanities.

What they said...

- Knowledge – *'We trust that you will consider adding a category within "social" that we believe should be distinct from "education and training", namely the research-knowledge-innovation continuum.'*
- *'A society's preparedness to manage the intellectual challenges of the future should be a crucial measure of its progress.'*
- Governance – *'Consider elevating "governance" to become a domain in its own right, besides "social", "economic" and "environmental" matters. One would need to be mindful of the fact that "good governance" is ... a culturally loaded notion. In a multicultural society such as ours, it would therefore be useful to unbundle some of the more presumptive definitions of "good governance".'*

The Shine Dome, Canberra.





2. EXPERT PANELS

2.1 Background

Another way in which the ABS sought the views of Australians was to bring together panels of experts from across the business, community, research and government sectors. Such experts, with wide, practical experience in representing and achieving positive outcomes for the Australian public, were seen to be in a strong position to speak for the public. Expert workshops were held to provide a mechanism for distilling the consultation feedback relatively efficiently. The panels and workshops provided an environment in which abstract and wide ranging ideas could be discussed productively.

This chapter outlines the roles and contributions of the Topic Advisory Panels (TAPs). It also looks at the outcomes of the MAP forum, held in November 2011. This forum brought together all TAP and Expert Reference Group (ERG) members, as well as a range of other noted experts and commentators, to share perspectives on how best to articulate aspirations for national progress and to help consolidate the views presented in Section 2 of this report.

2.2 Topic Advisory Panels (TAPs)

‘Four streams of consultation will be ongoing, covering each core topic area identified in this article and drawing on expert, business and community views in these areas of social, economic, governance, and environmental progress.’ – Future directions for measuring Australia’s progress (ABS 2010).

Four Topic Advisory Panels (TAPs) of experts were convened to guide the MAP consultation. A TAP was formed for each of the four MAP domains of society, economy, environment and governance, and members were selected for their standing and experience in these fields. They were also selected for their capacity to think across the four domains and to consider the bigger progress picture, as an integrated concern. Care was taken to ensure that members were drawn from a range of backgrounds to participate at this more in-depth level; for example members were drawn from the business, science, social science, media, education, social and economic commentary, think tank, and community sectors. An appropriate balance of gender, age and cultural background was also sought across the panels. The TAPs were chaired by the four Deputy Australian Statisticians, ensuring that senior ABS leadership gained a strong insight into the debate, discussion and decisions that took place around compiling the aspirations. TAP membership is listed in Appendix A.

While feedback from the consultation in the eight state capitals provided a starting point for the TAP work, the TAPs played a crucial role in arriving at the final consultation results (presented in Section 2). The TAPs met three times over the course of 12 months. At each meeting they further developed and refined the set of aspirations for national progress that were emerging from other streams of the consultation. They also defined and clarified important sub-areas, or elements, associated with each of the aspirations. The results of their deliberations, refined through interaction with the ERG and ABS expert areas, have been instrumental in producing the consultation results.

TAP Process

The process of developing aspirations and their sub-components via the TAPs was iterative. That is, the results of previous consultation feedback were summarised and brought forward to each new meeting. For example, the first TAP meetings were provided with feedback from consultation workshops held in the Australian capital cities. TAP members were able to use these results as a starting point for discussion and the compilation of aspirations. Feedback from the first TAP meetings was then compiled and presented as a starting point for discussion at the MAP forum, and so on.

While the ABS encouraged creative thinking, and was seeking broad aspirations for national progress (rather than precise targets), nonetheless a degree of discipline was applied to the process. The

TAPs were asked to increasingly focus on conciseness, conceptual precision and clarity to ensure the results could be readily translated into a statistical framework to provide a clear pathway to designing relevant measures. This aim was balanced against the need to describe the areas of importance in such a way as to ensure it would resonate with a wide range of Australians.

The first set of TAP meetings were full day meetings held at various times during May and June 2011. The MAP forum (November 2011) stood in place of a second set of TAP meetings (see below). The third and final TAP meetings were half-day sessions that focused on consolidation. At these final meetings the material was honed with a view to developing elements that described the key areas implied by each aspiration, some of which may provide conceptual anchors for progress measures. They reviewed and confirmed whether the most important elements had been identified, whether there were any conceptual gaps, and refined and endorsed the aspirations and theme headings.



2.3 The MAP forum

‘One way to achieve a balanced outcome will be to ensure feedback is obtained from a representative group of commentators. That is, ensure a cross-section of types of organisations are included in the consultation (e.g. community, academic, governmental, business), as well as providing opportunities for the general public to comment.’ – Future directions for measuring Australia’s progress (ABS 2010).

The MAP forum was conducted at ABS House in Canberra on 18 November 2011 and brought together diverse participants. It included the ERG members, TAP members and other selected participants who were invited to attend to further broaden the base of knowledge that could be drawn upon.

The forum aimed to further refine the aspirations for national progress by identifying gaps and discussing issues where there was not consensus. The forum took as its starting point material compiled from preceding consultation activities to assist delegates to move efficiently through the very broad ranging issues (the discussion starter material is at Appendix C). Delegates were asked to assess the material in terms of their particular field of expertise, and from a broader, more global perspective. The forum also aimed to facilitate discussion about the relationships between the four MAP domains and to identify gaps and articulate issues that they felt were important to take into account.

Issues raised during the forum

- Process and data gaps

Forum participants expressed appreciation for ABS's consultative approach, and confidence in the direction MAP was taking. They endorsed the process of first considering what aspects of life Australians think are important for national progress – and then developing measures to address these. It was felt this would allow gaps in statistical measurement to be identified and that this was an important task in itself.

- Simple language

Forum participants emphasised the need for the final aspirations to be expressed in non-bureaucratic, everyday language that would resonate with the Australian community. They hoped the aspirations would be relevant across generations.

- Progress for different groups

Other desirable outcomes of the MAP consultation would be the inclusion (in the refreshed MAP product) of disaggregations of the national indicators, to show how progress varied across different groups of people and regions. The idea of displaying longer time series for some indicators where possible was also discussed.

- Subjective wellbeing

The value of using subjective wellbeing data was endorsed, particularly as a complement to objective data and as a way of rounding out understanding of issues such as crime, safety and health.

- The MAP 2011 dashboard

The group discussed the 2011 MAP dashboard. Some suggested there may be indicators that correlate with progress in more than one domain and therefore would be particularly informative. Others felt that linkages between the domains were complex and best represented by a range of indicators as currently stands.

- Cross-cutting ideas

Several important ideas were identified as recurring across the four MAP domains including: resilience, sustainability, equity, opportunity, connectedness, and efficiency. Other cross-cutting themes identified throughout the consultation included global citizenship, infrastructure and wellbeing.

- A separate governance domain

The various discussion groups at the forum discussed and strongly endorsed the inclusion of governance as a separate domain within the MAP Framework. They agreed with our representation of governance as an enabler of societal progress (see figure 1.3).

Relationships between the MAP domains

The forum identified relationships between and within the four MAP domains. Some of these were seen as potential tensions, such as the relationship between effective regulation and freedom within the governance domain. Other relationships were identified as supportive alignments; for example, the economic and social domains are aligned in their support of the opportunity to meet basic needs as a means of achieving wellbeing. Such potential tensions and alignments need to be kept in mind to fully understand the factors that may influence progress outcomes.

The forum highlighted and confirmed that one of MAP's roles is to present data about these interacting aspects of life in one place, so they can be considered together, rather than separately. In this way, attention is appropriately placed on important tensions, leading to discussion about how they might be reconciled. For instance, if Australians aspire both to a prosperous society and one that sustains natural resources for future generations, MAP will allow broad progress in these areas to be assessed together, informing decision-making in both areas.

During the consultation more broadly, a number of possible relationships and tensions were also identified. Some of these are listed below. This is not a comprehensive list of all such relationships, but provides some examples as a starting point for further discussion.

- Higher wealth can be balanced with environmental sustainability
- Essential social needs, such as time spent with family and in carer responsibilities can be balanced with the necessity of achieving economic wellbeing (either from an individual or economy-wide point of view)
- Maintaining social cohesion and tolerance can be balanced with increasing cultural diversity
- Access to services for all can be balanced with Australia's unique geographical characteristics
- Short term decisions can be balanced with long term sustainability
- Accountability and transparency can be balanced with privacy and private sector freedoms

Figure 3.1: ABS staff at the MAP consultation forum.



Green Building Council Australia

The Green Building Council Australia (GBCA) was established in 2002 to develop a sustainable property industry in Australia. It promotes green building programs, technologies, design practices and processes, hoping to integrate green practices into building construction and operation. GBCA operates a national environmental rating system for buildings – Green Star. The GBCA has more than 900 member organisations, including government departments. It is a founding member of the World Green Building Council – a federation of national green building councils in 89 countries with the common goal supporting sustainable transformation of the global property industry. The GBCA has five priorities for placing Australia on a long term pathway to sustainability:

- provide visionary government leadership;
- retrofit and improve existing buildings;
- green education and healthcare facilities;
- move beyond buildings to communities and cities; and
- embed green skills across all industry training.

What they said...

The GBCA sees the built environment as critical to the future of Australia's productive capacity, the wellbeing of communities and the health of natural ecosystems. They link progress to the successful adaption of our built environment and the related challenges that impact across all four MAP domains. These include issues such as population growth and demographic change, transport congestion, global competition, climate change, resource depletion, housing affordability, infrastructure deficit, access to services, biodiversity conservation, energy and water.

The GBCA drew attention to its 'Green Star – Communities National Framework' which was compiled after consultation with all levels of government and a wide range of industry stakeholders, and outlines five best practice principles and benchmarks, for assessing and certifying sustainable communities:

- enhance liveability;
- create opportunities for economic prosperity;
- foster environmental responsibility;
- embrace design excellence; and
- demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance.

Cities – '[Our] aspiration is for Australia's major cities and urban areas to be well administered, globally competitive, providing for a high quality of life, using fit-for-purpose infrastructure, making efficient use of resources, easily accessible, inclusive and minimising their impacts on the health of natural systems.'

Built environment – 'Our submission... draws attention to the importance of the built environment to the future of Australia's progress, its inter-dependency with the four key themes for national progress and the opportunity to engage with others actively working in this area at present in order to align how best to collect, apply and report on information.'

Figure 4.1: Australian indicator projects. Please note this map is not a comprehensive account of projects occurring. Its inclusion is to indicate the extent of the initiatives occurring nationally. Visit an interactive version of the map here: <http://blog.abs.gov.au/Blog/mapblog2010.nsf>



3. STATE, TERRITORY AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

3.1 Background

The MAP consultation was designed to be as inclusive as possible, and to capture the views of people from across Australia.

The ABS held workshops in each state and territory capital, where it collected feedback from interested clients of the ABS, ranging from state and territory government clients to business and community groups.

In addition, the ABS examined a range of state and territory government planning documents. These documents contain information on goals and aspirations that guide the development of the states and territories. They are often developed through consultation with constituents. For example, in developing their State Plan, the South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet gathered information from around 9,000 South Australians.

The ABS also considered work done by a number of local governments to track progress for their communities, and sought input from a number of non-government groups developing community indicators for their region. In particular, the ABS worked closely with the Australian Community Indicators Network (ACIN) – a consortium of regionally based community indicator groups and individuals.

This chapter provides detail on the state and territory workshops held by the ABS; it examines the plans for regional and local progress set out by state, territory, and local governments; and it outlines relevant initiatives currently being undertaken by community groups.

In the state, territory and community contributions, there are many common ideas of progress. These ideas include: strong, resilient economies; quality health care; quality of life and wellbeing; sustainability of built and natural environments; transparent, trustworthy and effective governance systems; access to school, higher education and vocational education opportunities; and having strong, vibrant, healthy communities.

3.2 State and territory capital workshops

During May and June 2011, the ABS held workshops in all the Australian state and territory capitals, speaking with approximately 100 interested ABS clients, stakeholders and data users.

The workshops introduced participants to the MAP Consultation, and gained their views on the aspirations they considered important to national progress in the areas of society, economy, environment and governance. Participants were asked to form small groups and develop a short list of aspirational statements for national progress in the four domains. The themes that emerged from across the eight state and territory capital workshops are provided at Appendix B.

The feedback from these workshops formed the starting point for discussion at later consultation events. In particular, the four expert Topic Advisory Panels began their discussions with the state and territory workshop material as a reference point. Key feedback from the workshops was that governance should be elevated into a separate domain.

3.3 State and territory plans

State and territory governments hold responsibility for a range of important services and programs supporting Australian life. Their strategic plans provide a blueprint for government and for advancing state progress, and often summarise views and priorities of constituents. State and territory plans tend to be articulated in terms of 'goals', 'visions', 'ambitions', 'objectives' and 'strategic themes'. They often identify measures for assessing whether goals are being achieved, and may provide data to report on government performance or to inform adjustments to programs. Some aim to align

programs, for example, to ensure the activities of one department are not affecting the activities of another. They are of interest when considering aspirations for national progress.

A range of recent state and territory government planning documents (ordered by date of original publication) are summarised below with the aim of highlighting broad themes within the reports and commonalities across them. Some of these documents aim to chart the long-term course of the particular state (for example, 'Tasmania together'). While other plans focus on shorter time spans and aim to act as immediate priority goal setting documents (for example, the Queensland Government action plan). These distinct types of plans are presented here together for the purpose of providing a snap shot of current planning that relates to the progress of states and territories.

The key ideas articulated in each report have been presented in a format that allows comparison with the MAP framework. That is, they have been grouped into the four MAP domain areas: society; economy; environment; and governance. A selection of quotes have been included (where available) to provide a feeling for the aspirational nature of the initiatives. However the aspirations included here are examples only and do not reflect the breadth of each individual project.

Indicator based state planning documents – Summary table					
Plan title	Owner		Published		Key themes
Tasmania Together	Tasmania Together Progress Board	Statutory Authority	2011	First published 2001 Biannually updated	Standard of Living, Communities, Education, Health, Arts and Culture, Aboriginal Culture, Democracy, Work, Business, Natural Heritage, Natural Resources
South Australia's Strategic Plan	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	Government	2011	First published in 2004 Update 2007	Community, Prosperity, Environment, Health, Education, Ideas and Governance
The Canberra Plan	Department of the Chief Minister	Government	2008	First published 2004	Health, Safe Communities, Education and Skills, Economy, Vibrant Cities, Sustainable future, High Quality Services
NSW 2021 Baseline report	NSW Premier and Cabinet	Government	Dec 2011	Supersedes previous NSW state Plan	Economy, Quality Services, Infrastructure, Environment and Communities and Accountability

Note: At the time of publication, the governments of Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory did not have current state plans. The Queensland Government has an action plan that sets the direction for the recently elected government's first 100 days in office and this is included below.

'Possum Dreaming', located ABS House foyer



Tasmania Together

‘Tasmania is an island community, unique for its natural and cultural environment, where people enjoy a prosperous lifestyle based on quality, creativity and opportunity.’ – Tasmania together.

‘[Tasmania together](#)’ has been the principal body through which state plans have been developed in Tasmania since 2001. It is implemented by a Statutory Authority, is legislated under the Tasmania Together Progress Board Act 2001, and is overseen by the Tasmania Together Progress Board. Every five years, the board conducts a consultation to identify contemporary social, environmental and economic issues of importance to Tasmanians. The board also monitors progress towards the achievement of the goals and benchmarks identified.

An update of the plan, released in 2011, aims to support Tasmanians in achieving long-term social, economic and environmental goals. It provides a system of community goal setting and progress measurement, currently comprising 12 goals and 155 benchmarks that reflect the priorities expressed during extensive community consultation processes (held in 2000, 2005 and 2011). The 12 goals identified are:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Standard of living	Business and industry	Natural resources	Democracy
Aboriginal culture	Work opportunities	Built and natural heritage	
Safe communities			
Arts and culture			
Education			
Vibrant communities			
Health			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.



South Australian Strategic Plan

'This Plan reflects the input of communities throughout the state, and their aspirations for how we can best continue to grow and prosper; how we can most effectively balance our economic, social and environmental aspirations in a way that improves our overall wellbeing, and creates even greater opportunities.' – SA strategic plan.

The '[South Australian strategic plan](#)' was developed with direct input from the South Australian community and includes submissions and work from over 9,200 South Australians. The strategic plan is managed by the SA Cabinet Office which drives implementation of the Plan.

The 2011 plan is the second update since its original release in 2004 (the first update was in 2007). It is a blueprint for developing South Australia's prosperity and wellbeing, and aims to continue improvements. It contains a total of 100 targets categorised across fourteen broad areas. The fourteen areas and targets identified in the plan are:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Our communities are vibrant places to live, work, play and visit	A strong, sustainable economy that builds on our strengths	South Australians think globally, act locally and are international leaders in addressing climate change	
Everyone has a place to call home	We have a skilled and sustainable workforce	We look after our natural environment	
Strong families help build communities	South Australia plans and delivers the right infrastructure	We value and protect our water resources	
We are safe in our homes, community and at work			
We are connected to our communities and give everyone a fair go			
We are active in looking after our health			
South Australians are the best teachers and learners			
South Australians are creative; we innovate to overcome environmental, economic, and social challenges			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

The Canberra Plan

'[T]his document will be a launching pad for serious and thorough community conversations about issues that go to the heart of who we are as a city – conversations about future urban form and sustainable transport, conversations about reducing our ecological footprint, and conversations about the implications of our shifting demographic.' – The Canberra plan.

The 2008 '[Canberra plan](#)' sets out goals and describes a vision for the future directions of the national capital. It guides growth and development for the current generation and beyond, setting out a strategy that responds to challenges facing the city. The Plan reflects Canberrans' views, and is formulated via ongoing Australian Capital Territory Government consultation with stakeholders and the community on a wide range of issues. For example, the business community and tertiary sectors were consulted about the main economic and regional issues facing the ACT. Fourteen strategic themes are identified in the plan for ACT Government priority:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
A vibrant city and great neighbourhoods	A strong, dynamic economy, which meets future needs	A sustainable future	Canberra and region is well maintained and its assets protected
A fair and safe community	A resilient economy	A sustainable city and region	The community participates in decisions that affect them
Excellent education, quality teaching and skills development	Maintain growth that promotes sustainability	Protection of natural assets	
Quality health care		Climate change management	
High-quality services			

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

NSW 2021: A plan to make NSW number one

'NSW 2021 is driving our agenda for change in NSW to: restore economic growth; return quality health, transport, education, police, justice and community services, putting customer service at the heart of service design; build infrastructure that drives our economy and improves people's lives; strengthen our local environments, devolve decision making and return planning powers to the community; and restore accountability and transparency to government, and give the community a say in decisions affecting their lives.' – NSW 2021.

'[NSW 2021: a plan to make NSW number one](#)' was released in 2011. The report identifies the priorities for government action that the New South Wales Government intends to achieve over the next decade. The document also guides resource allocation and brings together important documents for local and regional areas. The plan was developed through a consultation process with communities across NSW. Progress is measured against five strategies linked to 32 goals, 186 targets and 281 measures. The five areas identified are:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Return quality services	Rebuild the economy	Strengthen our local environment and communities	Restore accountability to government
Renovate infrastructure			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Queensland Government Action Plan: Getting Queensland Back on Track

'This plan sets out the priorities and deliverables for the next six months and will be the next yardstick used to measure our progress in returning prosperity, accountability and opportunity to this state.' – Queensland Government action plan.

Though not a long-term state plan, the recently elected Queensland Government [action plan](#) articulates a vision for a strong, healthy and fair state. The report is an immediate priority plan that aims to set the course of the government's first 100 days in office. It supersedes the 'Towards Q2: tomorrow's Queensland' plan developed by the former government. The action plan focuses on key goals for the first year of government. It contains five broad pledges that act as both a map and a report card, outlining the work the Queensland Government is undertaking in the short term in the areas of infrastructure and front-line services. The areas and targets prioritised in the plan are: revitalising front-line services; growing the four pillar economy; lowering the cost of living for families; delivering better infrastructure and planning; and restoring accountability in government.

3.4 Local government

A number of local governments have also taken the initiative to develop indicators about the progress of their local communities. Most of these projects aim to provide residents with statistical information about their local community and how their neighbourhoods are performing against a number of wellbeing benchmarks. This is becoming a widespread approach for local governments. For example, in NSW local governments are required to report on the state of their communities through strategic plans that outline outcomes, objectives and ways to measure progress towards benchmarks.

It is impossible to represent all the work done of this type, but a few examples of these kinds of initiatives are listed here. For instance, Brisbane City Council's '[Living in Brisbane 2026](#)' presents the community's long-term plan to tackle issues associated with population pressures, climate change and skill shortages. Hurstville City Council's '[Community strategic plan](#)' focuses on the four broad goals of social diversity, prosperity, sustainability and leadership.

Another example is that of Penrith City Council who are currently in the process of establishing a set of [liveability indicators](#) for their community. The aim is to measure liveability outcomes for particular areas of interest to the community. Penrith City Council is also leading a project to develop a nationally consistent indicator set with the support of the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government (see Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, 2012). Penrith also successfully put forward a motion to the June 2012 Local Government National Assembly to support investigation into a national community indicator framework for local government (see Australia Local Government Association, 2012). The ABS supports the aspiration for a nationally consistent approach to Local Government, particularly where this allows comparison with state and national indicator frameworks.

The Sydney City Council has also taken steps to develop a [community indicator framework](#) for the city, aiming to measure successful, integrated and resilient communities. Finally, Wyndham City Council made a submission to the MAP consultation detailing aspirations for the four MAP domains based on their understanding of their community's concerns.

Living in Brisbane 2026 – vision themes

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Friendly, safe city Active, healthy city Vibrant, creative city	Smart, prosperous city	Clean, green city Well-designed, subtropical city Accessible, connected city	Regional and world city

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Hurstville City – Hurstville Community Strategic Plan

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Social and cultural development Creating a diverse, harmonious and inclusive city that provides a range of social, cultural, educational and leisure opportunities	Economic prosperity Increasing Hurstville's level of income and capital, and distributing this wealth to the community in the form of local facilities, services and jobs	Environmental sustainability Protecting and improving the city's natural and built environments and cultural assets for the health, wellbeing and benefit of current and future residents	Civic leadership A highly effective, efficient and accountable organisation which engages with the community to provide responsive and relevant services

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Penrith City Council – Liveability Indicators for Penrith City (proposed)*

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Education Health Housing Inclusion Leisure and recreation Mental health Open spaces Safety Sense of place	Business diversity and health Employment Mobility	Air quality Biodiversity Climate change and adaptation Energy Land Use Noise Waste and recycling Water Waterways	Communication and influence Ethical and equitable Infrastructure Provision of services

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

* These areas are tentative, that is, they are yet to be finalised by Penrith City Council.

Sydney City Council – five policy domains

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Healthy, safe and inclusive communities Culturally rich and vibrant communities	Dynamic, resilient local economies	Sustainable built and natural environments	Democratic and engaged communities

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Wyndham City Council

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Health Education and training Work Housing Financial hardship Families and communities Crime Transport	National wealth National income Productivity	Land Water Biodiversity Human settlements Estuaries and oceans Contributions to international concerns	Human rights Law and justice Administration of government Civic participation Democratic process Local government Regulation of public and private institutions

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

3.5 Community indicator initiatives

In the past decade, not only have governments begun to formulate indicators of state wellbeing and progress, but also communities themselves have begun to see this as an important way to understand and monitor their regional issues. The community indicator movement is another important way views of progress are expressed by Australians.

Australian Community Indicators Network

In the last few years, there have been a number of opportunities for professionals to meet and discuss issues around the development of community indicators. For example, a community indicators seminar held in Sydney at the NatStats 2010 conference was attended by over 60 people with an interest in sharing information about indicator projects and developments. Based on this response, the seminar organisers established an Australian Community Indicators Network (ACIN).

ACIN aims to assist people using or developing community indicators to share ideas and information, and to foster collaboration. The network aims to build a national dialogue and a knowledge base across community indicator policy, research and practice. It is guided by the [Declaration of the Australian Community Indicators Summit](#) (see National Statistical Service 2009) which outlines principles, issues and challenges for 'measuring the progress of Australian communities in the 21st century'. The Network has run three national webinars (May 2011, September 2011 and May 2012) hosted in the ABS state capital offices, with attendees participating across the nation.

Australian National Development Index (ANDI)

'ANDI is a community initiative to revitalise our democracy and engage all Australians in a national debate about our shared vision for Australia. Based on the idea of an ongoing national conversation about what kind of society we want Australia to be, it will develop clear ongoing measures of our progress towards that vision.' – Australian National Development Index

The [Australian National Development Index](#) (ANDI) is a partnership of 40 leading community organisations, church groups, businesses, and universities which aim to create a national development index. Still in development, the index aims to present a holistic measure of national progress and wellbeing that reflects the views of Australians.

ANDI's national progress measurement will be based on the goals and values identified by national consultation and research. It will address twelve progress domains:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Children and young people	Economic life and prosperity	Environment and sustainability	Democracy and governance
Communities and regions	Work and work life		Justice and fairness
Culture, recreation and leisure			
Education and creativity			
Health			
Indigenous wellbeing			
Subjective wellbeing			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

ANDI aims to work closely with the ABS, and to support and complement the MAP project. For example, the results of the MAP consultation will inform the ANDI consultative work, while the ANDI consultative work will be considered as part of the ongoing evolution of MAP.

Community Indicators Victoria (CIV)

'[A vibrant, resilient and sustainable community's] members are physically and mentally healthy, have a sense of wellbeing, are connected to others and have access to a range of services.' – Community Indicators Victoria

Originally developed by the Victorian Community Indicators Project commissioned by VicHealth in 2005-06, [Community Indicators Victoria](#) (CIV) was one of the first community indicator projects established in Australia. The project began with extensive consultation with local and state governments and academics, and a literature review, which formed the basis for developing a framework of statistical indicators for measuring the wellbeing of Victorians. CIV aims to be a resource centre supporting the development and use of community wellbeing indicators by local governments and communities. The framework covers a set of almost 80 community wellbeing indicators covering a broad spectrum of local community life:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Healthy, safe and inclusive communities	Dynamic, resilient local economies	Sustainable built and natural environments	Democratic and engaged communities
Culturally rich and vibrant communities			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Community Resilience in Queensland and Community Indicators Queensland (CIQ)

Community Resilience in Queensland is a database and information portal providing community resilience indicators and data at a local level for three pilot communities in Queensland: Tablelands Regional Council area; Rockhampton Regional Council area; and the township of Chinchilla in the Western Downs Regional Council area. It uses the draft Community Indicators Queensland (CIQ) framework as a foundation, and the indicators selected aim to provide a snapshot of resilience at a particular point in time across these three communities.

[Community Indicators Queensland](#) (CIQ) brings together leading agencies from local, Queensland and Commonwealth governments, the not-for-profit sector, and Griffith University researchers. It is an ongoing project with a formal steering committee, and is developing a framework, database and web interface to support the creation and use of local community wellbeing indicators. It aims to provide a platform for: investigating the measurement of policy effectiveness; community engaged policy making; and the development and implementation of national and international community wellbeing indicator frameworks. CIQ builds on lessons learnt from Community Indicators Victoria and incorporates Queensland's distinctive needs and attributes. It aims to enable the community to engage democratically in the development of their local environment.

Mount Isa, Queensland.



Garma Festival 2011

'The vision of the Yothu Yindi Foundation is for Yolngu and other Indigenous Australians to have the same level of wellbeing and life opportunities and choices as non-Indigenous Australians.' – Garma Festival 2011 Background Notes

The MAP project was represented at the 2011 Garma Festival of Traditional Culture in Arnhem Land. Garma is presented by the Yothu Yindi Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation. The foundation aims, among other things, to support the practice, preservation, maintenance and presentation of traditional knowledge systems and cultural practices, and to share knowledge and culture, fostering greater understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

The theme of the festival was 'Academic excellence and cultural integrity', and many of the discussions were relevant to the idea of progress as it relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) peoples. A strong theme was the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution. Other themes included health, education, knowledge and creative industries. People spoke of striving for academic excellence across cultural contexts, and preparing young ATSI Australians to achieve their full potential. They spoke of the potential for reconciliation and collaboration in Australia to be world leading, and discussed systematic approaches to improving child health.

'... cultural structure is vital for social cohesion, for holding communities and clans and families together and therefore for community development – and that includes economic development and even economic opportunities through that culture – and community wellbeing.' – Garma Festival 2011 Background Notes, Mandawuy Yunupingu, former Deputy Chairman of the Yothu Yindi Foundation

Excerpt from Mick Gooda's speech at Garma Festival, 2011

At Garma in 2011, there was unanimous agreement that success in education is a crucial and fundamental component for achieving success in every dimension of life including health, employment, environment, economy and technology, and critical to reducing the inequalities that are currently experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples...

'...My friend ... from Perth who, when asked what type of future he'd like to see for us, put it like this. It's a vision that I share and I want to share it with you. [He] said:

"I want for me and my children – as I do for you and your children – to grow really, really old together – having led fantastic lives that have allowed us to make a lifetime contribution to the health and wellbeing of the broader community and our families.

I want to know that when we were tested by life's challenges, that we pulled together to face them as a people; that we drew upon the best of what we had, to find positive solutions to the things that have tested us along the way.

I want to know that, purposively, we took on and changed those things that we felt do not reflect what we want in a fair, honest, respectful and harmonious society.

I want that we learn to hold and to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history as an essential part of the Australian story because we see ourselves as part of it – connected to it, proud of it and centred by it."

I want a truly reconciled community: a truly reconciled Australia. And I want that we all want it.' (Gooda 2011)

SPOTLIGHT

Griffith University workshop

A MAP workshop at Griffith University was attended by researchers in a number of fields including: urban research, suicide prevention, environmental studies, psychology, futures, criminology, business, social science, human services, science engineering and technology.

What they said...

The participants suggested a number of aspirations. They noted that progress needs to be achieved within an inter-generational model, where future generations seven times removed are considered; that a holistic approach is required; and that progress data should reflect the community's aspirations.

SOCIETY

Overarching aspiration: To track how we are achieving and what environment and society will be handed on to our children

Social inclusion and participation – the impacts of these on wellbeing

The right to housing, shelter, and safety – basic needs being met

The right to appropriate employment – the accountability of employment in meeting Australian's needs and aspirations and providing education

Education – that allows people to have their own learning journey

Space – national, state, regional and local

ECONOMY

Economic mobility – the ability to increase one's personal wealth, own your business, home, etc.

Sustainable economy and sustainable use of the environment – The economy acknowledges dependence on the sustainable use of natural resources and the environment; on the supply of ecosystem services; on renewable and non-renewable resources; and on how we use them (e.g. rate of use and degradation, efficiency of recycling, ecological footprint per capita)

Security – The economy provides for basic needs for everyone, and stability (people need to know whether they will have a job next year, whether inflation will erode the value of Australia's currency, etc.)

ENVIRONMENT

Raise awareness of the environment – through measures, knowledge, valuing

Value psychological and physical knowledge

Transparency

The impact of the natural environment on the human environment

Preservation – inter-generational preservation of the natural environment and promotion of this

Equitable access to the natural environment

GOVERNANCE

Overarching aspiration: Eudemonia – a flourishing life

Participation – an active democracy subject to practical constraints such as manageability, time, and resources

Tolerance of difference

Informed decisions guided by a consensual values framework

Equity in all its senses – across many population groups

Transparency – anti-corruption

Arts Queensland

'When we are touched by beauty, moved by tragedy, stirred by music or disturbed by the new and strange, our impulse is to share those responses.' – Arts Queensland submission

Arts Queensland supports arts and culture policy in Queensland. Their mission is to 'build a strong arts and cultural sector that celebrates our unique identity and cultural heritage, drives a thriving, creative economy, develops the creative capital of Queensland communities and enriches the lives of all Queenslanders'. They support quality, participation and resilience in the arts and cultural sector, including developing creative places that contribute to liveable communities, and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture.

Their submission to the consultation drew on work undertaken by the Centre for Public Culture and Ideas at Griffith University on a national cultural indicators framework. This framework is a basis for measuring the contribution that arts and culture make to public good. This value is understood through three themes:

- Economic development;
- Cultural value; and
- Engagement and social impact.

What they said...

The Arts Queensland submission emphasised valuing arts and culture and enhancing understandings of cultural diversity. They saw arts and culture as catalysts for economic growth, and important to personal and community wellbeing and social inclusion. They argued that the inclusion of arts and cultural indicators in MAP would 'support an expanded, more inclusive vision of Australia's progress'.

Valuing arts and culture – '[Australians] value arts and culture in their lives and in the lives of their children. But beyond this love of the arts is the contribution that the arts make to our culture... to Australia's identity, to our society and our economy.'

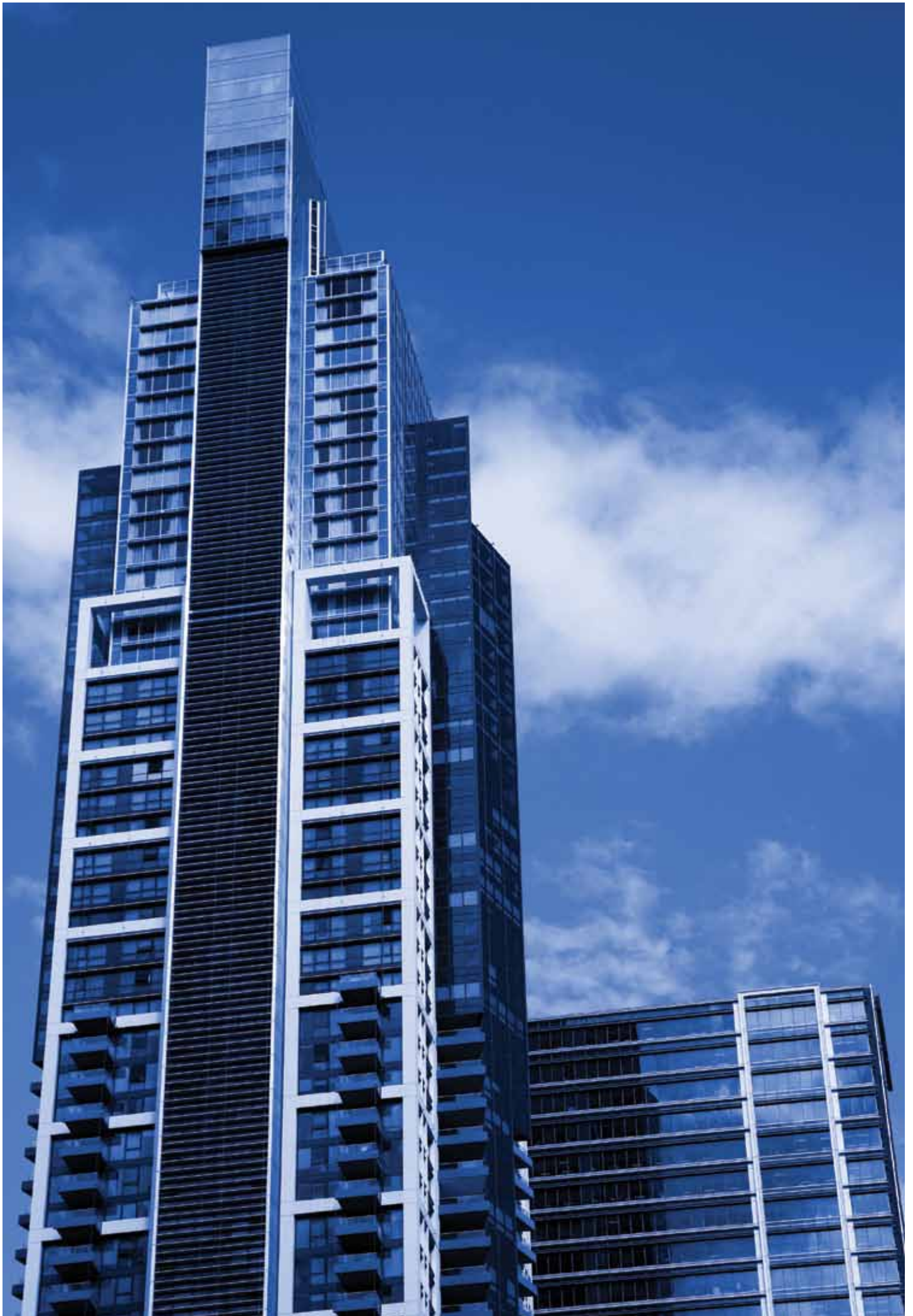
Benefits of arts and culture – 'Arts and cultural activity contribute to the economy, to community wellbeing and social inclusion, to Australia's cultural heritage and identity, and to our confidence and standing in the world.'

Creative capital – 'We are only now beginning to recognise how this creative capital can promote innovation, economic development, social inclusion, and international cooperation.'

The role of the arts – 'The arts show us what we are and what we might become. Arts experiences can inspire, transport, divert, discomfort and shock us.'

Diversity – 'Artistic expression travels well, crossing cultures and territories, generations and time. Australian stories, images, music and dance have their sources in many cultures and traditions.'

'The vitality of Australian creative work comes from the infusion of existing traditions with new energy and influences... Australian cultural identity embraces this diversity.'



4. AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS

4.1 Background

Australian government departments and agencies help shape the nation's progress in many ways. They formulate public policy, regulate many social and market interactions and run programs that provide essential services for the whole of Australia. In undertaking this work, these agencies develop insights into both the day-to-day needs and concerns of Australians and the visions of members of Parliament as elected representatives. This places them in a valuable position to discuss the aspirations important to Australians for national progress.

For these reasons, and to complement information collected about the work of state and territory governments, the ABS sought submissions from a range of Commonwealth Government agencies for the MAP consultation. Agencies were asked to articulate what they saw as important to national progress and to reflect on the concerns of the Australian community.

Consultation workshops were undertaken with a number of government agencies, and, where relevant, we considered information about their strategic directions or mission statements (see Appendix D). These statements were seen as relevant as they tend to reflect the kind of broad level aspirations the MAP consultation is focused on.

The ABS also took account of existing government work that articulates national aims, particularly work tracking progress towards national objectives. A selection of these initiatives is presented here along with a selection of aspirational quotes from them. The aspirations are examples only and do not reflect the breadth of each project.

Many of the departments and organisations spoken to throughout the consultation supported MAP as a valuable national measurement tool, complementing headline economic measures. They viewed MAP as potentially providing an overarching framework for national progress measurement.

'MAP could potentially provide the underpinning framework and core indicators for a range of Commonwealth Government indicator projects, so as to increase the coherence and integration of these projects, and minimise duplication.' – Department of Infrastructure and Transport

This chapter outlines the submissions and contributions the ABS received from federal government agencies. Each submission is presented and a summary of its emerging themes and aspirations provided. The chapter then examines a selection of other relevant federal government initiatives.

4.2 Submissions and contributions

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

'All Australians can maintain an enriching work life and fulfilling family life'

FaHCSIA supports the Commonwealth Government to deliver social policy outcomes. Their 2011-2014 strategic framework identifies their aims as being to:

- Increase social and economic participation;
- Improve social cohesion;
- Close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage;
- Support basic living standards; and
- Support individuals, families and communities to build their capacity.

The department pursues these aims with a focus on particular population groups such as families and children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women, and people with disabilities. In keeping with this, FaHCSIA's submission identified aspirations specific to groups of people in particular situations or facing particular difficulties.

In their submission, FaHCSIA emphasised economic inclusion for people with a disability, safety for women and children, work/life balance for families, and social and economic participation for older Australians. They put forward aspirations associated with reducing homelessness and the affordability of services of all kinds, ranging from housing to legal aid and healthcare services. FaHCSIA proposed an overarching goal of ensuring inequality of wealth and/or income 'does not continue to grow, or does so at a slower rate than previously'.

For the economic domain in MAP, FaHCSIA noted the inclusion of older Australians in the prosperity of the nation, economic security for people with disability, and supporting greater participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the workforce and business. The latter was aimed at both addressing employment and income disparities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians, as well as strengthening the national economy and helping meet labour shortages in key industries. FaHCSIA highlighted two aspects of this: growing a prosperous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector; and financial security and independence.

For the domain of governance, FaHCSIA focused on rights, protection, justice, services and programs for people with disability, and emphasised the importance of transparency and accountability across all governments.

Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance)

'A government cannot be truly effective unless it has an ongoing capacity to effectively manage changing circumstances – including both structural changes (for example, demographic change...) and economic shocks (for example, the Global Financial Crisis)'.

The Department of Finance and Deregulation is responsible for government financial management and expenditure, deregulation reforms, and for supporting the delivery of the Federal Budget. The department manages Commonwealth Government agencies' overall financial framework and (non-defence) assets. It provides insurance services for government and advises on improving financial risk management and applying technology to government operations.

The department's submission to MAP discussed good governance, in both the institutional and market arenas, as 'an important foundation for national progress'. Governance was associated with the ability of a nation to manage economic shocks and structural change such as population ageing, and therefore, with the sustainability of government financing and service delivery. In particular, the submission discussed the value of ensuring the quality of regulation improves over time, and of balancing the costs and benefits of regulation.

Sustaining government finances and service delivery was a strong theme in the department's submission which discussed the effects of the Global Financial Crisis on some countries. In this context, the department highlighted the value of retaining a strong balance sheet and credit rating, and of vigorous private and banking sectors and systems that regulate markets while remaining 'market friendly'.

The department's submission emphasised that measures of progress must be able to provide information on the fiscal sustainability of government.

Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services is responsible for developing policy on service delivery and delivers its services through Medicare, Centrelink and Child Support Programs. These programs aim to provide a portal where people can interact face-to-face with the government. With their close connections to Australians requiring services and service providers, and as a nexus between government and the public, they provide a valuable perspective on progress. In their submission to MAP, the department focused on social policy service delivery, and articulated three key aspirations for national progress.

Society – ‘Australians have the ability to access services and information regardless of where they live.’

The department’s submission discussed the importance of an inclusive society where people can ‘access the support they need, when they need it’. For example, their service delivery reform agenda focuses on providing services that are ‘easy, high quality and works for you’. The department saw technology, information and convenient physical locations as critical to accessibility, and were interested in progress measures that provided feedback on satisfaction with service delivery.



Governance – ‘Australians have the ability or are provided the mechanisms to contribute to decisions that directly affect them.’

This aspiration was set in the context of people being able to influence the design of services and to ensure the relevance of these services to their needs and circumstances. The department said that people’s ability to contribute to their local service delivery supports early intervention, better connections between services, better informed delivery and stronger outcomes overall.

Progress overall – ‘Australia is considerate of future generations.’

With this cross-cutting aspiration, the Department of Human Services focused on ‘our collective interest in leaving a sustainable legacy for future generations’, noting the value we place as a society on current generations leading ‘lives they value without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same’. The department suggested this would apply, for example, to sustaining service delivery in the face of inter-generational issues such as the ageing population.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

DEEWR provides national policy direction in education, workplace training, transition to work, and conditions and values in the workplace. The department’s vision is for ‘a productive and inclusive Australia’, and it aims to make a difference at the various stages of an individual’s life, including through supporting early childhood care and development, quality education at all levels, a skilled workforce with greater participation, safe workplaces, and an inclusive society. With its interest in education, DEEWR has a forward looking perspective, aiming to help ‘shape Australia now and into the future’. The DEEWR submission to MAP proposed four aspirations focused on the society, economy and governance domains.

Society – ‘A society where people develop the capabilities to meet their full potential.’

This excerpt illustrates that capability and development are understood as underpinning improvements in national economic performance, health, civic and social engagement, and as building social capital and an inclusive society. DEEWR noted that quality early education and support equip children for life, and that the experiences and social skills provided by schooling support their transition to further education and broader life success. DEEWR underlined the value of the wider learning environment – parents, teachers and the community – in developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. They noted that access to quality education involves supporting parents to balance work and family commitments, and focusing on disadvantaged Australians.

Society – ‘A more participative and inclusive society.’

This aspiration centred on supporting people who face barriers to full participation in society, or who may be experiencing difficult times. DEEWR noted that this support is crucially linked with breaking inter-generational cycles of poverty, and with work, which can move people out of poverty and increase engagement. The submission noted the particular importance of addressing areas and

groups where there is greater disadvantage. It supported steps to reconciliation and to closing the gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

Economy – *‘A safe, fair, productive and successful workplace.’*

This aspiration centred on high quality workplaces supporting both wellbeing and business productivity, which were seen as linked. It covered such areas as health and safety, employee engagement, job satisfaction and management practices, but also the ability to balance work and family responsibilities. In an increasingly competitive and globalised world, DEEWR aspired to more flexible and innovative ways for employers and employees to work together. DEEWR linked a healthy working environment – that provides financial security, a sense of purpose and is free from discrimination and harassment – with benefits to society such as reduced injury, improved mental health, and social cohesion.

Governance – *‘Better service delivery: our aspiration for governance.’*

DEEWR endorsed focusing on governance in MAP as an area crucial for national progress and quality of life. The submission noted high quality government services are an important aspiration, and that the experience people have while receiving a service impacts on wellbeing and social cohesion. DEEWR aspired to services that treat clients with respect and courtesy. They said programs should be carried out in a ‘fair, diligent and transparent manner’ and be flexible enough to meet individual needs.

The Attorney-General’s Department

‘The Attorney-General’s Department plays a central role in delivering the Government’s commitment to build an Australia which is stronger and fairer.’

The Attorney-General’s Department submission focused on society, governance and the environment. Aspirations within the society domain related to whether people feel, and are, safe from crime, communities can plan and protect themselves from the consequences of serious disasters, and Australians have the opportunity to improve their situation in life, personally and through functional communities.

Governance – *‘The governance system is appropriate for and recognises all Australians, that people respect the structure and agencies of government and... feel the structures represent them.’*

The governance aspirations involved having: appropriate governance structures (including the legal system) that represent the public and which people understand and can easily access, especially those people who are vulnerable and disadvantaged; appropriate government regulations; and a governance environment in which citizens can engage, participate and influence the policy-making process. While these were aspirations for all Australians, the submission emphasised the importance of better justice and safety outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – *‘Justice and safety outcomes for Indigenous Australians are improved. It is important to measure the success of laws which impact Indigenous Australians when considering progress.’*

The submission also provided an environment aspiration focusing on the importance of continued and resilient critical infrastructure, and linking this with national security, economic prosperity and social wellbeing.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) – Housing and Homelessness Group

‘People can rent or buy accommodation that suits their needs.’

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia’s health and welfare. This submission focused on the importance of housing, noting that improvements in Australia’s long-term housing situation contribute not just to progress in the social domain, but also in the other domains; ‘for example, energy efficient homes benefit the environment and home



ownership benefits individuals and the economy'. They noted the implicit aspiration underlying MAP housing measures is that people have access to the shelter, security, privacy and assets provided by adequate housing, and suggested the following aspiration:

'All Australians have access to adequate and affordable housing.'

AIHW outlined adequate housing as not being homeless or living in an overcrowded situation, and having a reasonable standard of energy efficiency, stability (e.g. tenure length) and comfort, as determined by community expectations rather than in terms of minimum requirements. They noted people should be able to rent or buy a home that meets their needs, especially in terms of proximity to work, services and social networks, and suitability to their life stage. AIHW said housing costs should not mean people had to forego access to other life essentials, such

as nutritious food, health care and transport (e.g. no more than 30% of income for low income Australians), and highlighted in particular that these costs need to suit the circumstances of older Australians and people who need to move.

Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)

'Being able to make sound money decisions is a core skill in today's world ... It affects quality of life, the opportunities we can pursue, our sense of security and wellbeing, and the overall economic health of our society.'

ASIC is Australia's corporate, markets and financial services regulator. It contributes to Australia's economic reputation and wellbeing by ensuring that Australia's financial markets are fair and transparent, supported by confident and informed investors and consumers. The ASIC submission focused on the importance of financial literacy or capability in terms of understanding money and finances, and being able to confidently apply that knowledge to making effective financial decisions. The effects of financial literacy were seen as multidimensional – 'an important personal, economic and ultimately social goal'. The submission discussed the importance of schooling in developing foundational financial literacy, achieving long term change and building human capital. The submission also identified a number of principles underpinning financial literacy:

- Inclusiveness – reaching all Australians, particularly those in need and future generations of consumers and investors;
- Engagement – helping all Australians appreciate the importance of financial literacy and that small things done regularly make a difference;
- Diversity – delivering learning that recognises the different ways people learn and allows all Australians to participate;
- Knowledge and empowerment – giving all Australians access to information, tools and ongoing support systems;
- Improving outcomes – recognising that information alone is not always enough and using additional mechanisms to achieve better outcomes;
- Partnerships – mapping and building on existing foundations to fill gaps and ensure all sectors and agencies work cooperatively; and
- Measurement – evaluating our work to know what is and is not effective, and learning from and sharing these evaluations.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

DFAT's core responsibility is to protect and advance the interests of Australia and Australians internationally. Their work involves preserving national security and protecting Australians abroad, and advancing Australia's economic prosperity and interests, including contributing to the economy's international competitiveness. They saw the issues of national security and prosperity as being of fundamental concern to all Australians. Their submission also discussed the value of national identity and image, quoting the then Minister for Foreign Affairs Kevin Rudd, who said the government wanted 'Australia to be seen around the world as a good country and Australians as good people.' The submission also proposed Australians have a 'broad wish for an effective and efficient government that delivers high quality programs and services tailored to legitimate need'.

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship is responsible for immigration arrangements, border control, citizenship, ethnic and multicultural affairs. DIAC did not make a formal submission to the MAP consultation but suggested it would be valuable to consider the important areas of access and equity, especially in the context of the cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia, and endorsed measures that inform on social inclusion. The department said their 'understanding of the aspirations and goals of our diverse society reveals that, in general, Australians share similar goals for themselves and their families, irrespective of their cultural, linguistic or national background'.

Department of Infrastructure and Transport

'Transport services and infrastructure facilitate an efficient and productive economy... Transport enables Australians to get where they need to go in a timely manner, whether that be for the purposes of accessing employment, education, services, social connections or leisure activities.'

The Department of Infrastructure and Transport assists the Government to promote, evaluate, plan and invest in infrastructure and by fostering an efficient, sustainable, competitive, safe and secure transport system. The ABS met with the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, which endorsed MAP as providing a valuable overarching approach to progress measurement. The department noted that transport and infrastructure are essential facilitators for economic activity and population wellbeing, underpinning the efficient and smooth operation of industry and impacting quality of life. They saw value in understanding factors such as the amount of time people spend travelling to work and the costs of transport congestion.

The department noted that transport and infrastructure are issues that cut across the MAP domains, and that another cross-cutting area of strong interest to the community was liveability, which is addressed in their 'State of Australian Capital Cities' report (Infrastructure Australia 2010). The lens of liveability was suggested as a useful way of understanding quality of life (e.g. the 'State of Australian Capital Cities' report covers areas such as housing, health, transport, the built environment, safety and social inclusion). Issues of distribution and equity were also highlighted as important, particularly regional differences, and the department endorsed the ABS reporting progress measures for a range of geographical regions where data permits.

Department of Defence

'This report to the Government reflects the ongoing interest of many Australians in the maintenance of a capable, self-reliant defence force that can safeguard and protect Australia and our interests.'

The Department of Defence forms part of the Australian Defence Organisation, along with the Australian Defence Force. The department's role is to support the Australian Defence Organisation's mission to defend Australia and its national interests. The Department of Defence emphasised the value Australians place on national and regional security. They provided MAP with a copy of their

'Looking over the Horizon: Australia's Consider Defence' report (Department of Defence 2008). This report was the product of public consultations reviewing the Defence White Paper Public Discussion Paper, and provides valuable insight into the community's perception of Australia's defence forces and operations, informing the future directions of Australia's defence strategy.

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC)

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities develops and implements national policy, programs and legislation to protect, conserve and advance a sustainable Australia in the areas of the environment, water, heritage and communities. DSEWPaC pointed to the key outcomes and priorities for the department over the next five years, including:

- Biodiversity and ecosystems: The conservation and protection of Australia's terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems.
- Sustainable population and communities: Improved sustainability of Australia's population, communities and environment; and reduction and regulation of waste, pollutants and hazardous substances.
- Sustainable water: Adaptation to climate change, wise water use, secure water supplies, and improved health of rivers, waterways and freshwater ecosystems.
- Environmental protection and heritage conservation: Increased protection, awareness and appreciation of Australia's environment and heritage.

DSEWPaC undertakes several programs related to the MAP work, including the 'State of the Environment Report', the 'Sustainable Population Strategy', and the 'Measuring Sustainability' program. These initiatives are outlined below along with a number other relevant federal government initiatives.



4.3 Other Australian government initiatives

Council of Australian Governments (COAG)¹

COAG is an intergovernmental forum that, among other things, develops and monitors policy reforms. The overarching objective of COAG is to improve the wellbeing of Australians now and into the future. It does this through implementing a reform agenda designed to support the cooperation between federal and state governments and departments that policy reform can often require. The agenda focuses on five themes of strategic importance:

- A long term strategy for economic and social participation;
- A national economy driven by our competitive advantages;
- A more sustainable and liveable Australia;
- Better health services and a more sustainable health system for all Australians; and
- Closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage.

These themes are realised through Australian governments and agencies agreeing to take action, and being held accountable for action, on a range of objectives identified in six National Agreements. While these objectives are more specific and policy-related than the broad aspirations collected in the MAP consultation, they give an indication of priority areas of government and community interest.

Objectives of selected COAG National Agreements

National Healthcare Agreement	National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development Agreement	National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap)
<p>Australians are born and remain healthy</p> <p>Australians receive appropriate high quality and affordable primary and community health services</p> <p>Australians receive appropriate high quality and affordable hospital and hospital-related care</p> <p>Older Australians receive appropriate high quality and affordable health and aged care services</p> <p>Australians have positive health and aged care experiences which take account of individual circumstances and care needs</p> <p>Australia's health system promotes social inclusion and reduces disadvantage, especially for Indigenous Australians</p> <p>Australians have a sustainable health system</p>	<p>All working aged Australians have the opportunity to develop the skills and qualifications needed, including through a responsive training system, to enable them to be effective participants in and contributors to the modern labour market</p> <p>Individuals are assisted to overcome barriers to education, training and employment, and are motivated to acquire and utilise new skills</p> <p>Australian industry and business develop, harness and utilise the skills and abilities of the workforce</p>	<p>Closing the life expectancy gap within a generation</p> <p>Halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade</p> <p>Ensure all Indigenous four year olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years.</p> <p>Halving the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade</p> <p>Halving the gap for Indigenous people aged 20-24 in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.</p> <p>Halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade</p>
National Disability Agreement	National Education Agreement	National Affordable Housing Agreement
<p>People with disabilities and their carers have an enhanced quality of life and participate as valued members of the community</p>	<p>All Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy</p>	<p>All Australians have access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing that contributes to social and economic participation</p>

Treasury Wellbeing Framework

At its core, the mission of the Australian Treasury is to improve the wellbeing of the Australian people. The Treasury does this by providing objective and thorough analysis of options in its advice to government, and by assisting the Treasury ministers to administer their responsibilities and implement Government decisions.

Treasury takes a broad view of wellbeing as primarily reflecting a person's substantive freedom to lead a life they have reason to value. This view encompasses more than is directly captured by commonly used measures of economic activity. It gives prominence to respecting the informed preferences of individuals, while allowing scope for broader social actions and choices. It is open to both subjective and objective notions of wellbeing, and to concerns for outcomes and consequences as well as for rights and liberties.

The '[Treasury wellbeing framework](#)' operates to facilitate an objective and thorough analysis of options for improving wellbeing. It identifies five dimensions that directly or indirectly have important implications for wellbeing, and are particularly relevant to Treasury. The five dimensions of the Framework are:

- The set of opportunities available to people. This includes not only the level of goods and services that can be consumed, but good health and environmental amenity, leisure and intangibles such as personal and social activities, community participation and political rights and freedoms.
- The distribution of those opportunities across the Australian people. In particular, that all Australians have the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life and participate meaningfully in society.
- The sustainability of those opportunities available over time. In particular, consideration of whether the productive base needed to generate opportunities (the total stock of capital, including human, physical, social and natural assets) is maintained or enhanced for current and future generations.
- The overall level and allocation of risk borne by individuals and the community. This includes a concern for the ability, and inability, of individuals to manage the level and nature of the risks they face.
- The complexity of the choices facing individuals and the community. Our concerns include the costs of dealing with unwanted complexity, the transparency of government and the ability of individuals and the community to make choices and trade-offs that better match their preferences.

State of Australian Cities – Department of Infrastructure and Transport

Produced by the Major Cities Unit in the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, the '[State of Australian cities](#)' report brings together data and information across social, economic and environmental parameters to provide an overview of Australian cities with populations over 100,000 people (see Infrastructure Australia 2010). The report highlights emerging trends and issues to promote discussion on managing growth and other change in major urban centres, and allows Australian cities to be compared with each other and internationally. It provides an evidence base to support the national urban policy released in the Department's 'Our cities, our future' (Department of Infrastructure and Transport 2011), which sets out steps to make Australian cities better places to live and work. The report looks at the health of Australia's major cities in relation to a number of major topics: population and settlement; productivity; sustainability; liveability; and lastly, governance.

¹Please note: While COAG is technically an agency that sits across all levels of government (federal, state, territory and local), it has been included in this chapter for practical reasons.

State of the Environment Report – Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

The [‘State of the environment report’](#) (SoE) is produced by DSEWPaC to provide accurate and up-to-date information on environmental issues to raise public awareness and support decision makers. The intent is to capture and present key information on the state of the environment in terms of:

- the current condition of the environment;
- pressure on the environment;
- drivers of those pressures;
- management actions to address environmental concerns;
- remaining risks; and
- outlooks for the future.

The SoE 2011 report adopts a report card style approach to assessing the condition, pressures and management of the Australian environment, and covers nine themes in addition to a chapter on drivers:

atmosphere	biodiversity
inland water	heritage
land	built environment
marine	coasts
Antarctic biodiversity	

Sustainable Population Strategy – Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

‘A sustainable Australia is a nation of sustainable communities which have the services, job and education opportunities, affordable housing, amenity and natural environment that make them places where people want to work, live and build a future.’

[‘Sustainable Australia – sustainable communities: a sustainable population strategy for Australia’](#) was one of the key initiatives of the Australian government’s 2011-2012 budget commitment to build a sustainable Australia, led by DSEWPaC. The Strategy defines a vision for sustainable communities as those which have the right mix of services, job and education opportunities, affordable housing, amenity and natural environment, making them places where people want to live, work and build a future. It aims to maintain and improve the wellbeing of current and future generations through encouraging more effective anticipation, planning and responses by all levels of government to the impacts of population changes on our economy, communities and the environment. Across government, a number of initiatives under the Strategy are underway. DSEWPaC has responsibility for the Suburban Jobs, Sustainable Regional Development and Measuring Sustainability (see below) programs.

Measuring Sustainability – Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

The [‘Measuring sustainability’](#) program is one of the measures put in place to support implementation of the government’s Sustainable Population Strategy. It is aimed at improving information on Australia’s sustainability, including through the development of a set of sustainability indicators to assist decision-making and planning at national and community levels.

Social Inclusion Principles – Australian Government

‘The Australian Government’s vision of a socially inclusive society is one in which all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in our society.’

The Australian Government is committed to reducing persistent social disadvantage throughout society. The **‘Social inclusion agenda’** was formed to achieve better outcomes for the most disadvantaged people in Australian communities. The agenda was developed by the Australian Social Inclusion Board and was established in May 2008 as the main advisory body to Government on ways to achieve better outcomes for the most disadvantaged in our community. The government adopted a set of principles to guide the agenda and policy, which includes aspirations – what is hoped will be achieved – and approaches – ways to help get there.



Aspirations

- reducing disadvantage;
- increasing social, civic and economic participation; and
- developing a greater voice, combined with greater responsibility.

Approaches

- building on individual and community strengths;
- building partnerships with key stakeholders;
- developing tailored services;
- giving a high priority to early intervention and prevention;
- building joined-up services and whole of government solutions;
- using evidence and integrated data to inform policy;
- using locational approaches; and
- planning for sustainability.

The publication *‘A stronger, fairer Australia’* (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2012a) sets out the social inclusion vision and includes a policy framework built on five pillars:

- I. Economic growth – maintaining a strong, internationally competitive economy to secure jobs for the future and create opportunity for all.
- II. Equitable social policy – creating the opportunities and resources that every Australian needs to participate in the economy and community life through education, skills training, employment strategies, incentives for entering the workforce, and providing adequate income support when people need it.
- III. Quality services – delivering world class services that meet the needs of every Australian in crucial areas like education and training, health, housing, and social support, and targeting extra support to the communities where it can do the most good, most notably disadvantaged Indigenous communities.
- IV. Strong families and communities – supporting families and building strong and cohesive communities through better family services that build capabilities and by improving community infrastructure.
- V. Partnership for change – building new and innovative partnerships with all sectors of the economy by creating joined-up government and getting government, businesses and not-for-profit organisations working together to build stronger communities and create new opportunities for disadvantaged people.

Achieving the social inclusion vision would mean all Australians would have the resources, opportunities and capability to learn, work, engage with people, and have a voice in decision-making. The annual report 'Social inclusion in Australia: how Australia is faring' (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2012b) is complemented by a compendium of indicators, which demonstrate progress towards social inclusion across many domains.

Kimberley Region, Western Australia.



Submissions relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

'If Australia is to regard itself as an advanced, equitable, western democracy it must eliminate the major economic and social disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.' – IBCA, submission to MAP

The **Indigenous Business Council of Australia** (IBCA) supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses becoming an integral part of the Australian economy. While Australia is successful in the global economy, IBCA said it is important this wealth and success is shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They recognise Australian governments have attempted to close gaps through welfare, training and employment creation, but they propose that increased support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector would also yield positive economic results.

The **Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council** (IHEAC) advises the Australian Government on higher education, research and training issues in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education students and staff. It aims to increase participation in higher education and higher education policy development, and to support higher education institutions to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. IHEAC's submission to the ABS aspired for improved outcomes in higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, so

'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people share in all that Australian society has to offer.'

They suggested improved measures of educational participation and outcomes by focusing on advantage and strength, rather than simply attainment.

The **Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health** in the Department of Health and Ageing suggested including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific aspirations and measures in MAP, and comparisons with non-Indigenous populations. They suggested equity and equality as social and economic goals, as well as the freedom to express ethnic, cultural and religious identity and difference; social justice and social cohesion; work/life balance; and freedom from discrimination.

The ABS spoke to representatives from the **Telethon Institute for Child Health Research** and **BioMed Central: International Health and Human Rights**, who emphasised the importance of showing how progress differs across regions and for different groups, in particular for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that national aggregate statistics on their own can mask this information. They suggested data addressing these issues should be a prominent feature of MAP, rather than a supplementary feature, and pointed to their paper about indigenous wellbeing (Cooke et al. 2007) which discusses Australia's achievements in this area when compared with other similar countries.

Business Council of Australia

'Improving the quality of life of all Australians within prosperous, secure and liveable communities requires well managed population growth over the first half of this century.'

Established in 1983, the Business Council of Australia (BCA) is a national association of the CEOs of 100 leading Australian corporations. The BCA provides a forum for Australian business leaders to contribute to public policy debates and 'build Australia as the best place in which to live, to learn, to work and do business'. It aims, for example, to help initiate and shape the key economic and business reform debates underpinning Australia's economic position. The Council provided the ABS with information outlining their vision for national progress, based on a submission developed in response to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities' sustainable population strategy (see Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities 2011).

The BCA supported the MAP consultation initiative, agreeing with the approach of first identifying commonly held aspirations for Australia's progress before establishing measures of progress. The submission also stated it was important for the Australian community to be informed on an ongoing basis by government through independent and transparent assessments of progress towards national goals.

What they said...

With its support for establishing a clear understanding of shared national goals, the BCA's submission outlined many aspirations, some of which are quoted here, and many of which echo themes found throughout the consultation. For example, it stated that Australians want to live in a country where they can:

- participate and contribute to society and the economy;
- live healthy lives and have access to health care and aged care;
- have access to quality education;
- feel safe and secure;
- be able to afford a home to live in;
- have a sense of belonging and feel connected to the community and the world;
- live in a society that cares about others and its environment;
- move around freely and efficiently; and
- have a good balance of time spent working, with family and in recreation.

It also emphasised that population growth at a sustainable level is the best way to achieve national goals.

Its aspiration for a prosperous Australia...

Prosperity – 'Continue to improve Australian's living standards by attracting investment and keeping our economy strong in the face of labour shortages, an ageing population and increased competition in an increasingly global economy.'

5. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

5.1 Background

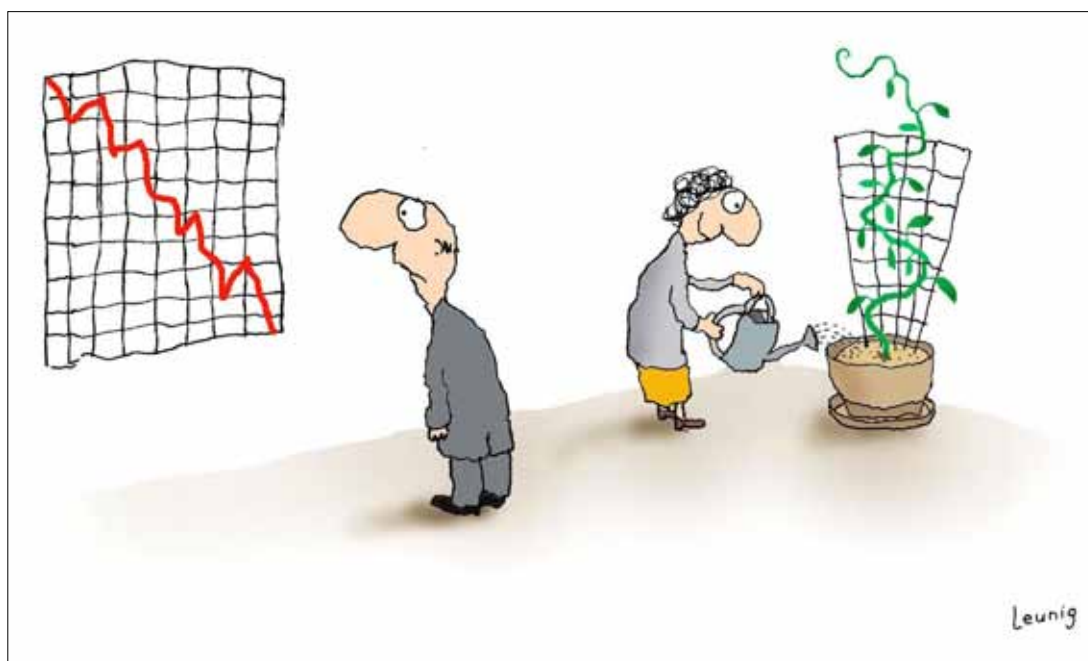
The interest in 'progress' resonates around the world. Many other nations and organisations are undertaking their own measures of progress, measuring what aspects of life they see as important. As part of the MAP consultation, the ABS looked at a selection of other projects being undertaken throughout the world, to see how they relate to the work currently being done with MAP.

The ABS is a world leader in measuring progress, having first produced MAP in 2002. The ABS aims to continue to contribute to the international conversation about progress by describing a new conceptual approach: for the first time, articulating the aspirations of Australians for their nation.

There are, however, many different approaches that can be taken to measuring progress. Different organisations may choose to focus on different things (such as wellbeing or sustainable development), yet there are many common themes that emerge across different countries.

This chapter describes the historical international context for measuring progress which has influenced the MAP consultation. It then presents a selection of international initiatives which the ABS has examined and concludes by describing emerging international themes and aspirations.

Figure 5.1: 'The Graph', Michael Leunig.



5.2 Historical context

There have been a range of global initiatives that have attempted to articulate commonly held aspirations for society. For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, produced in the aftermath of the Second World War, outlines a range of rights seen as fundamental for all people. Examples include Article 23, which addresses the right to employment in a safe and prejudice-free environment; Article 24, which addresses the right to rest and leisure; and Article 25, which addresses the right to an adequate standard of living. Other programs, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) established in 2000, have outlined goals for human development, such as reducing poverty, improving health and working towards sustainability. Such global programs have acted as a basis for thinking about what makes a good society and inform the work now being undertaken by statisticians.

As well as the ABS, many other statistical organisations have taken up the challenge of statistically assessing whether nations are achieving progress. The Human Development Index (HDI), for instance, first published in 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme, analyses progress through the lens of ‘human development’. It assesses whether people are achieving ‘a long and healthy life (health), access to knowledge (education), and a decent standard of living (income)’ (see United Nations Development Programme 2012). This index was one of the first to quantify national progress beyond economic measures alone, and to compile disparate data into a single index.

The OECD has been particularly active in the field of measuring progress and in coordinating related international activities. In 2004, the OECD held the first of a series of World Forums on measuring wellbeing and fostering the progress of societies. These forums have been attended by significant global players and have established a range of directions for global progress measurement. In 2008, the OECD hosted a ‘Global project on measuring the progress of societies’ which further mobilised political and international interest. In 2010, it established WikiProgress, an online forum for sharing information and developments. In 2011, the OECD released the first ‘Better Life Index’, an interactive tool for comparing wellbeing across nations, accompanied by the How’s Life report.

In Europe too, a number of key initiatives have been undertaken which have had far-reaching influence. The 2009 ‘Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress’ (Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi 2009) underlined the need to understand societal progress beyond economic success by listing a set of recommendations for improving measures of national progress. These included improving a number of traditional economic measures, measuring components of the quality of life, and emphasising the importance of data about improvements in sustainability.



Also in 2009, the European Commission released the report 'GDP and beyond: measuring progress in a changing world' (as part of its Beyond GDP initiative – see European Commission 2009). The report contained a 'roadmap' outlining five actions to improve progress measures: 1. Complementing GDP with environmental and social indicators; 2. Near real-time information for decision-making; 3. More accurate reporting on distribution and inequalities; 4. Developing a European Sustainable Development Scoreboard; and 5. Extending National Accounts to environmental and social issues.

In 2007, the Centre for Bhutan Studies Gross National Happiness Index conceptualised national progress in terms of whether Bhutan's citizens were flourishing. This measurement system grew out of a philosophy of gross national happiness conceived by Bhutanese leaders in the 1970s. They considered national progress to go beyond economic development, encompassing emotional, spiritual, cultural and environmental factors. This approach taken by a small country has been far reaching in its influence.

These most recent activities have added momentum to the global movement to measure progress more broadly. The Better Life Index (OECD 2011a), the Bhutan Gross Happiness Index (Centre for Bhutan Studies 2012), the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi commission recommendations for quality of life measurement, and other selected international projects are further explored in this chapter.

5.3 A selection of international projects

There are many statistical initiatives underway globally that aim to bring together broader measures of societal wellbeing or progress. Figure 5.2 provides an indication of some of that activity, although this account is by no means comprehensive. The following section provides a broad overview of the kinds of activities taking place across a diverse range of countries, sectors, purposes and scales.

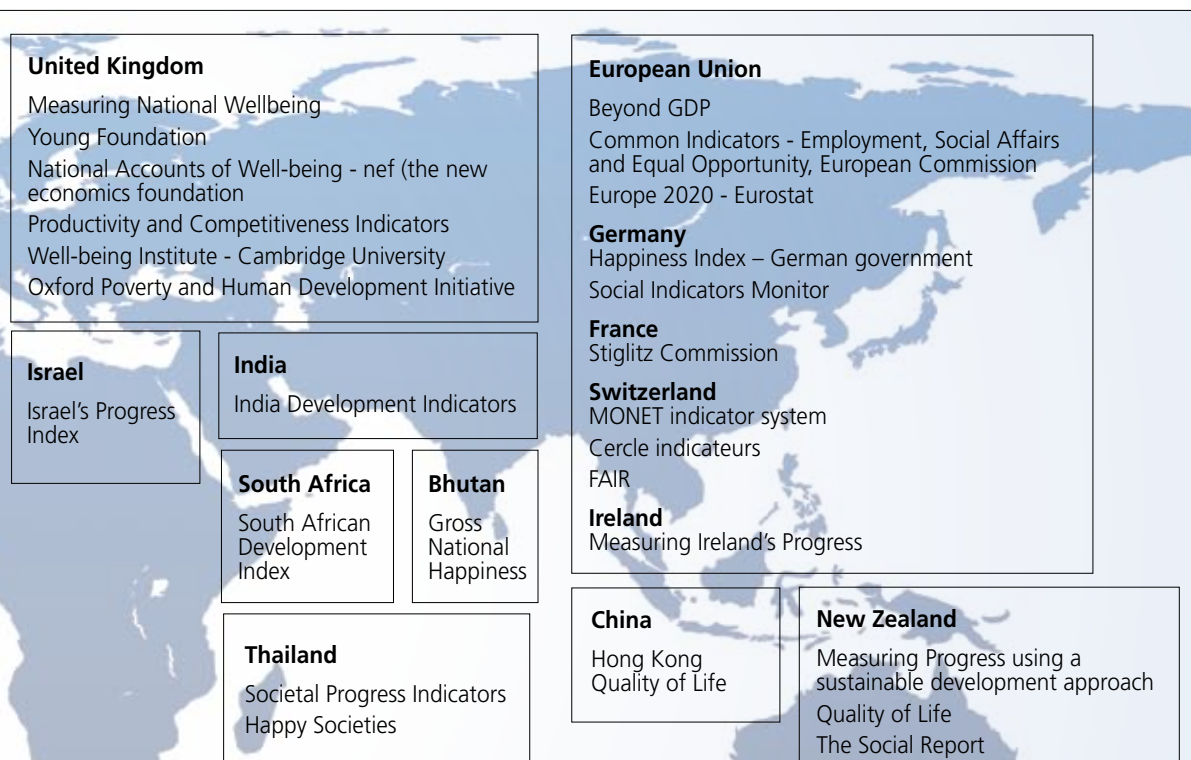


Figure 5.2: International indicator projects. Please note this map is not a comprehensive account of projects occurring. Its inclusion is to indicate the extent of the initiatives occurring internationally. Visit an interactive version of the map here: blog.abs.gov.au/Blog/mapblog2010.nsf

The summaries below are set out in a way that aims to help readers see how the central ideas of each initiative relate to the MAP domains of society, economy, environment and governance. This arrangement is for comparative purposes only. In some cases, areas have been repeated if they relate to more than one MAP domain.

A selection of quotes have been included (where available) to provide a sense of the aspirational nature of the initiatives. The quotes are examples only and do not reflect the breadth of each project.

Hong Kong Quality of Life Index – 2003

The [Hong Kong Quality of Life Index](#) was first developed by the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2003 (Centre for Quality of Life 2012). It aims to track the wellbeing of the people of Hong Kong, using 21 indicators across three areas of social, economic and environmental wellbeing. The table below identifies the themes relating to Governance from their social domain:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Health	Housing	Air + water quality	Freedom of press / criticism of press
Life satisfaction	Unemployment	Noise	Government performance
Stress	Economic conditions	Recycling	
Crime	Wages		
	Education		

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Monitoring Sustainable Development in Switzerland (MONET) – 2003

‘Health must be maintained and promoted.’ – Swiss Federal Statistical Office 2010.

‘Every individual should earn enough to secure vital necessities and have discretionary disposable income.’ – Swiss Federal Statistical Office 2010.

The Swiss Government developed MONET as a tool for assessing whether Switzerland is ‘on the road to sustainable development’ ([Swiss Federal Statistical Office](#) 2010). Using a traffic-light approach, the initiative displays 16 indicators (see table below) to determine whether the country is making improvements under the following headings:

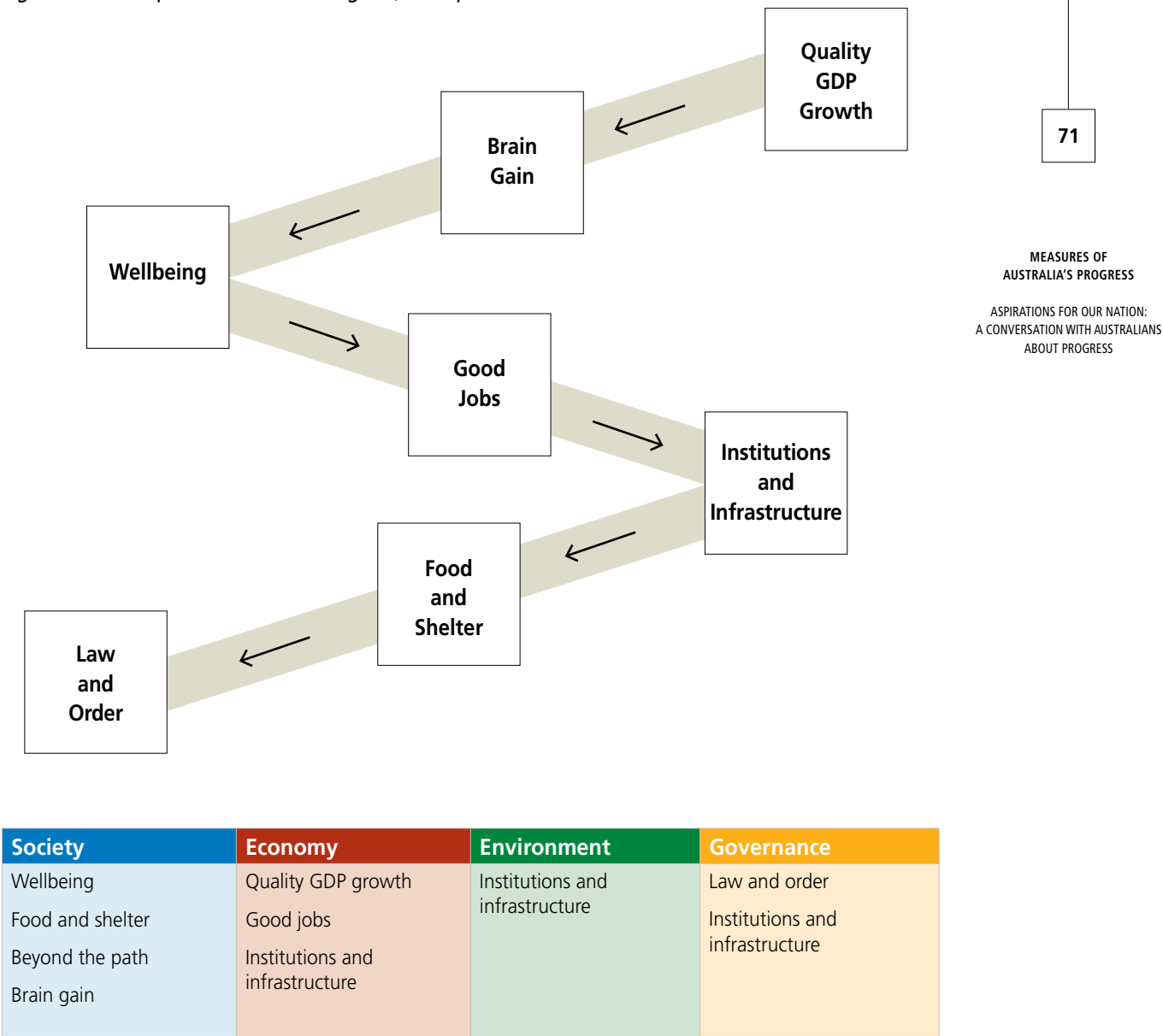
- Meeting needs: how well do we live?
- Preservation of resources: what are we leaving behind for our children?
- Decoupling (efficient use of resources): how efficiently are we using our national resources?
- Fairness: how well are resources distributed?

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Health	Public debt	Freight transport	Official Development Assistance
Physical safety	Investment	Passenger transport	Equality
Teenage reading skills	Innovation and technology	Energy consumption	
	Income	Consumption of raw materials	
	Unemployment	Biodiversity	
		Built-up areas	

Gallup World Poll – 2005

Active in more than 140 countries, the [Gallup World Poll](#) tracks public attitudes towards political, social and economic issues (see Gallup 2012). The Gallup world path (see Figure 5.3) uses the poll responses to measure progress towards national wellbeing. The seven components of the world path are informed by the poll responses.

Figure 5.3: Gallup World Path to Progress, Gallup website



Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Happy Planet Index – 2006

The [Happy Planet Index](#) was released in 2006 as a new approach to comparing nations' progress by taking sustainability into account (see new economics foundation 2010). Developed by Nic Marks of the new economics foundation, the 'Happy Planet Index' ranks nations according to how well they are doing in terms of supporting their people to live long and happy lives, while ensuring that future generations can do the same. It combines environmental impact with wellbeing to assign each country with an index, based on three measures:

- Subjective life satisfaction;
- Life expectancy at birth; and
- Ecological footprint per capita.

Gross National Happiness Index, Bhutan – 2007

'Psychological well-being leads to desirable outcomes, even economic ones, and does not necessarily follow from them.' – Centre for Bhutan Studies 2012.

[Gross National Happiness](#) (GNH) is a philosophy that assists thinking about progress and advancing national happiness in Bhutan. Observing the effect of economic development on the cultural fabric of other nations, it was conceived of in the 1970s by then King Jigme Signye Wangchuck as a way of thinking about progress in terms wider than economic development. Practically, this has resulted in an approach to measuring national progress that looks at whether both material needs are being met, as well as the spiritual, emotional and cultural needs of Bhutanese society. This approach heralded a new way of thinking about progress, garnering international attention and directing thinking about progress towards the effect of growth on individual happiness and wellbeing.

'Governance cuts across all domains/sectors and therefore, its effect on the society at large arises from the cumulative efforts of all sectors' – Centre for Bhutan Studies 2012.

The Centre for Bhutan Studies produced an index using responses from their Gross National Happiness Survey. The nine domains of gross national happiness are:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Community vitality Cultural diversity and resilience Education Health Psychological wellbeing Time use	Living standards	Ecological diversity and resilience	Good governance

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Quality of Life recommendations, Commission on Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress – 2009

The [Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi](#) report highlighted the limitations of using GDP to describe societal wellbeing and outlined 30 recommendations to better measure progress and related ideas. The report outlined three areas that should be considered: economy, quality of life, and sustainability. With regard to measuring quality of life, the report recommended focusing on eight areas:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Education	Material living conditions (income, consumption and wealth)	Environment (present and future conditions)	Political voice and governance
Health	Insecurity (economic and physical condition)		
Personal activities (including work)			
Social connections and relationships			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Measuring New Zealand's Progress Using a Sustainable Development Approach – 2009

In 2009, Statistics New Zealand released its report '[Measuring New Zealand's progress using a sustainable development approach: 2008](#)' (Statistics New Zealand 2009). Their approach was to look at national progress through the lens of sustainability, asking the question: 'How is New Zealand progressing towards or away from sustainable development?' The most recent update presents 16 key indicators (see table below), answering four key questions:

- Meeting needs: How well do we live?
- Fairness: How well are resources distributed?
- Efficiency: How efficiently are we using our resources?
- Preserving resources: What are we leaving behind for our children?

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Health expectancy	Unemployment rate	Greenhouse gas intensity	Good governance
Physical safety	Disposable income	Energy intensity	
Access to childhood education	Income inequality	Distribution of selected native species	
Adult educational attainment	Economic hardship	Greenhouse gas emissions	
Speakers of te reo Maori	Labour productivity	Nitrogen in rivers	
		Assets and infrastructure	

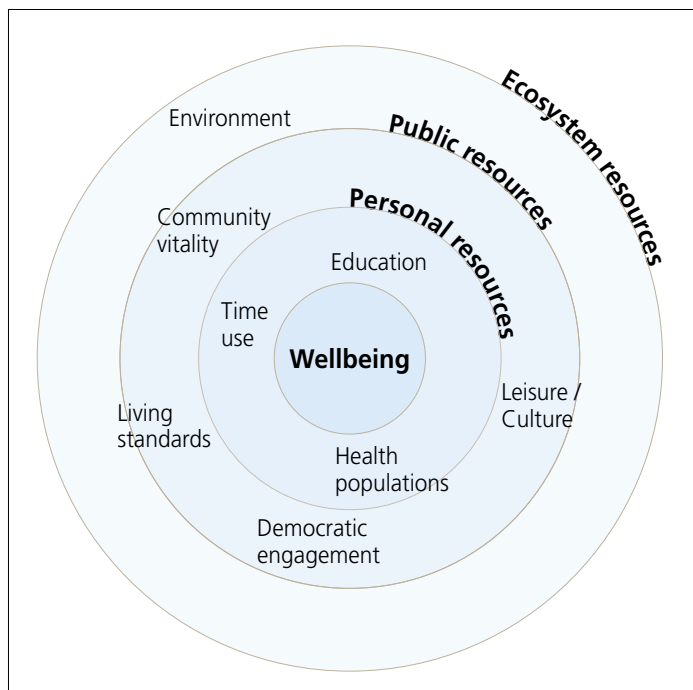
Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Canadian Index of Wellbeing – 2009

'Individuals' relationship to their community – both in terms of the stock and flow of resources and opportunities available to people and in terms of the strength and quality of relationships that people enjoy – is inextricably linked to wellbeing.' – Canadian Index of Wellbeing (2011: 2).

The University of Waterloo, together with many other organisations, has developed the [Canadian Index of Wellbeing](#) to 'measure what matters' most to Canadians (see Michalos et al. 2011). To describe the index the 'Mandala of wellbeing' (see Figure 5.4.) for thinking about how various aspects of society relate to wellbeing. The index uses an array of indicators taken from survey responses and national data. The indicators are organised into eight domains:

Figure 5.4: Mandala of wellbeing, Canadian Index of Wellbeing (see Michalos et.al. 2011: 7)



Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Community vitality	Living standards	Environment	Democratic engagement
Education			
Healthy populations			
Leisure and culture			
Time use			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

Europe 2020 Strategy, European Union – 2010

Europe 2020 is a strategy aimed at developing ‘a smarter, knowledge based, greener economy, delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion’ within the European Union (see European Commission 2012). The strategy uses five headline targets, comprising indicators which stand as national goals. The targets are:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Reducing school drop-out rates below 10% at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education At least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion	75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed 3% of the EU's GDP to be invested in Research and Development	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions 20% (or even 30%, if the conditions are right) lower than 1990 20% of energy from renewables and 20% increase in energy efficiency	

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.



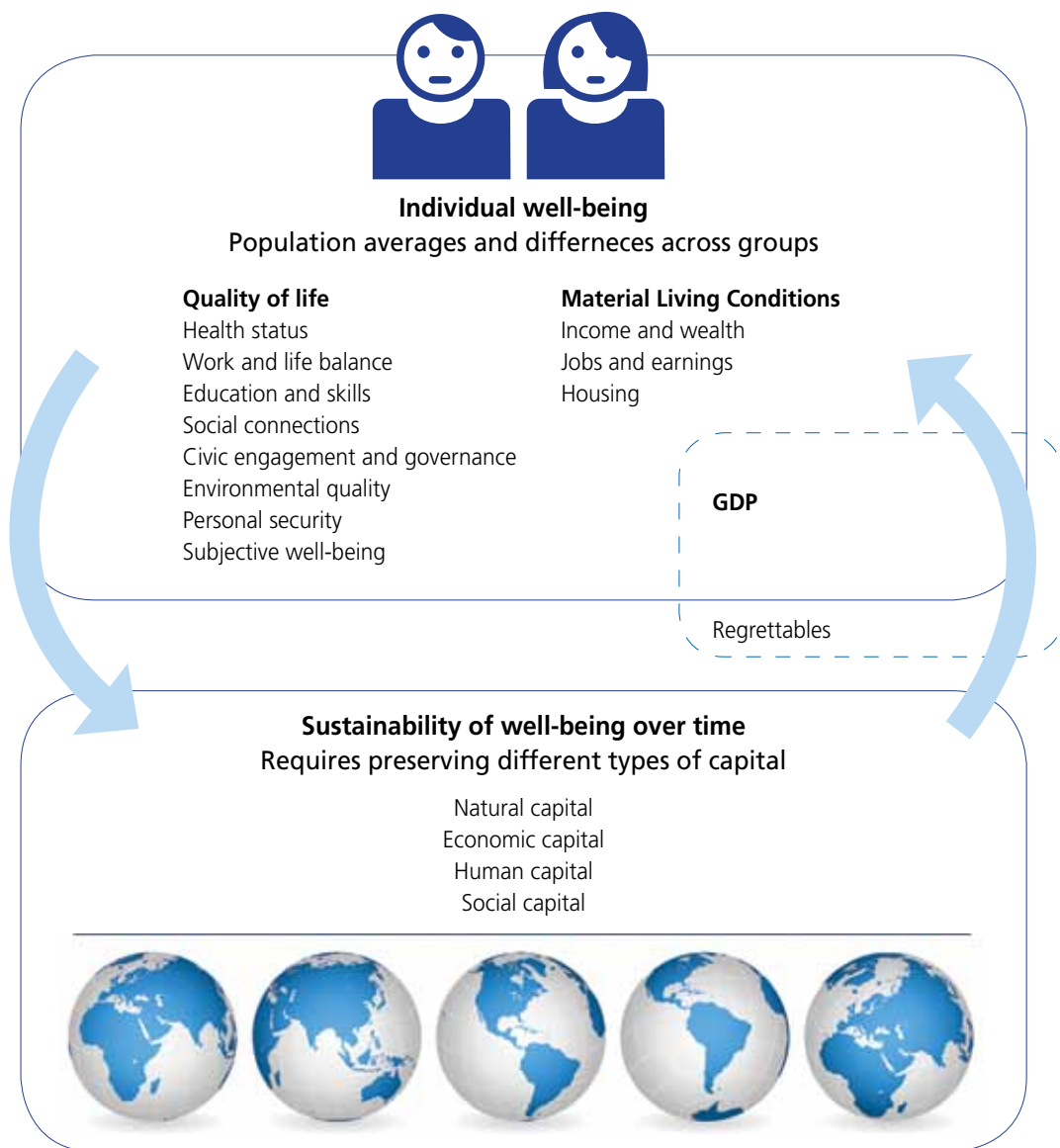
Better Life Initiative, OECD – 2011

'The frequency of contact with others and the quality of personal relationships are crucial determinants of people's well-being.' – OECD (2011b: 170).

'Having a job that matches one's aspirations and competencies and that pays adequate earnings is a universal aspiration of people around the globe.' – OECD (2011b: 57).

The **Better Life Index**, accompanied by the '**How's life?**' report, is part of the OECD's commitment to answering the question 'Is life getting better?' (OECD 2011b). The initiative is centred on individual wellbeing, tracking the improvement of people's lives. It organises indicators under two major domains: material living conditions and quality of life. Complementary to these domains is a third domain – Sustainability of well-being over time, though this is out of the scope of the Better Life Index (see OECD 2011a). Within the domains are the following eleven themes:

Figure 5.5: The 'How's Life?' framework for measuring wellbeing and progress (OECD 2011b: 19).



Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Education and skills	Income and wealth	Environmental quality	Civic engagement and governance
Health	Jobs and earnings		
Housing			
Personal security			
Social connections			
Subjective wellbeing			
Work–life balance			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

The Oxfam Humankind Index, Scotland – 2012

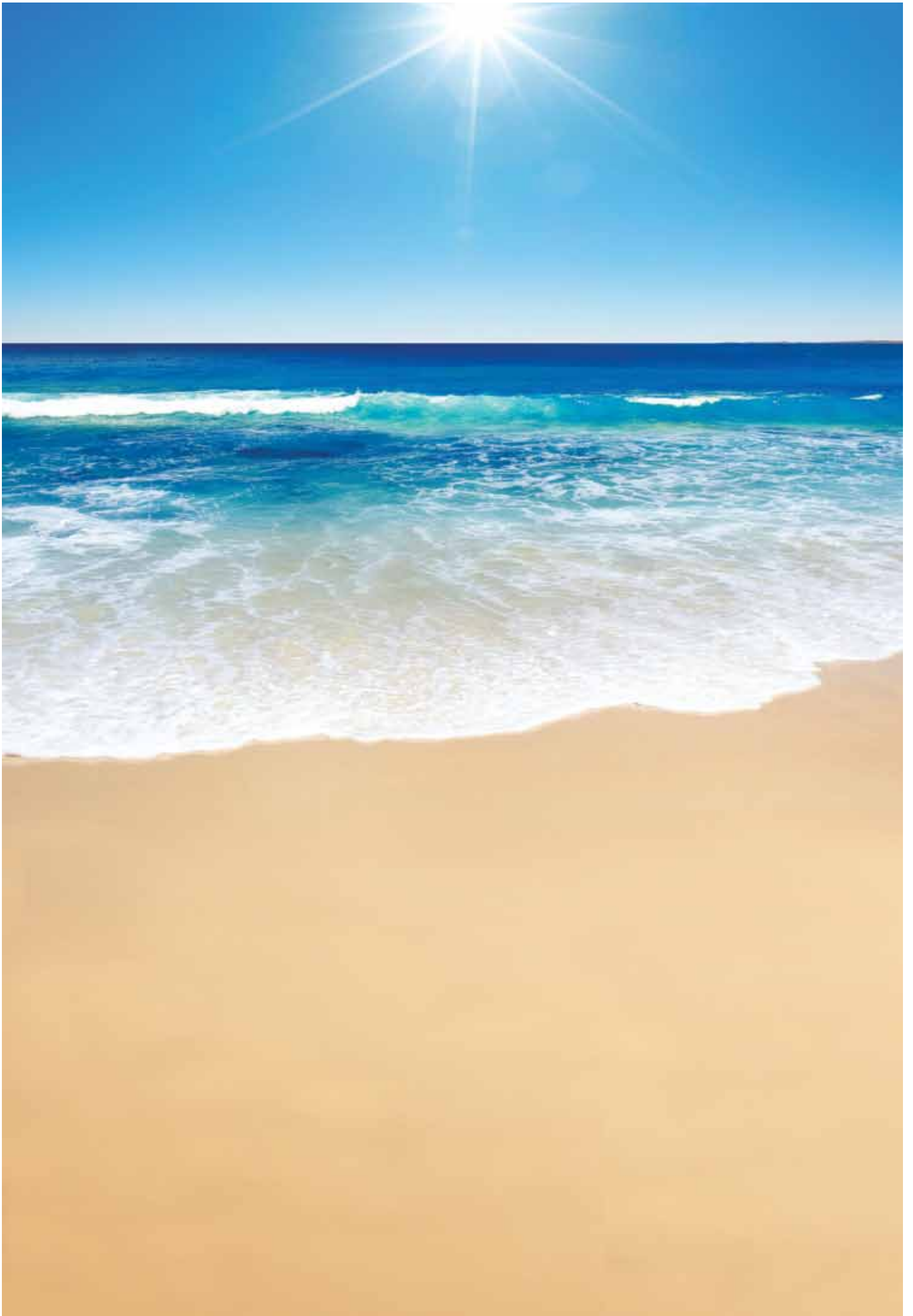
‘A stable network of supportive, caring, loving relationships to encourage, console, enthuse and otherwise support people through...life and living [sic.] it to the full.’ Participant response – Oxfam Scotland (2012: 8).

‘The environment’s important to me, it makes me happy. It affects my mental health, it’s inspirational, it supports my income and my family’s income.’ Participant response – Oxfam Scotland (2012: 8).

The [Oxfam Humankind Index](#) aims to assess Scotland’s prosperity through a holistic and representative measure of progress, taking into account what really matters to the people of Scotland (see Oxfam Scotland 2012). Like the ABS, Oxfam Scotland has undertaken a consultation with the public to develop the index. Their aim is for policy makers and the community to use the index to make informed decisions based on the aspirations of the people of Scotland – whether they relate to their own wellbeing, the economy, governance or the environment. The index is organised into the following sub-domains:

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Affordable, decent and safe home	Having satisfying work to do (whether paid or unpaid)	Living in a neighbourhood where you can go outside and enjoy having a clean and healthy environment	Human rights, freedom from discrimination, acceptance and respect
Physical and mental health	Secure work and suitable work	Access to green and wild spaces; community spaces and play areas	
Having good relationships with family and friends	Having enough money to pay the bills and buy what you need	Having good transport to get to where you need to go	
Feeling that you and those you care about are safe	Having a secure source of money	Having facilities you need locally	
Access to arts hobbies and leisure activities			
Getting enough skills and education to live a good life			
Being part of a community			
Being able to access high quality services			
Feeling good			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.



Measuring National Wellbeing, United Kingdom – in development

‘People’s economic well-being is determined by their wealth as well as their income.’ –
Office of National Statistics (2011: 18).

‘Having family around brings esteem, value, hope and love.’ Participant response –
Office of National Statistics (2011: 21).

In 2010, British Prime Minister David Cameron asked the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to measure national wellbeing as a basis for new policy. As a result, the ONS has developed the [‘Measuring national wellbeing’](#) initiative, aimed at capturing wellbeing, the performance of the economy and the quality of the environment (see Office of National Statistics 2011). The ONS has been undertaking a similar consultation process to MAP. This has involved consultation with experts and a ‘national debate’ which aimed to gather the views of what really matters most for national progress to the people of the United Kingdom. The ONS has proposed the following ten key themes or ‘domains’ for measuring progress, which have been used as tools for discussion through the consultation.

Society	Economy	Environment	Governance
Individual wellbeing	Personal finance	The natural environment	Governance
Our relationships	The economy		
Health			
What we do			
Where we live			
Education and skills			

Note: grouping into society, economy, environment and governance is to allow for comparisons with MAP only.

5.4 Summary of themes and aspirations

As can be seen from the overviews presented, many common aspirations are held across nations. The opportunity to gain an education, knowledge and skills was seen as fundamental for social, economic and individual wellbeing, as was the ability to have good health. Housing was critical for people’s sense of safety, security and wellbeing and seen as a basic need. Safe communities and strong relationships were both acknowledged as contributing in a positive way to societal progress as was people’s ability to have flexibility and control over how they use their time.

In the economic sphere, the need for jobs which provide adequate income, a sense of self-worth and use of skills was a common theme. While, the environment was widely seen as an essential support to human life and its natural resources need to be sustained for the survival of future generations. The intrinsic importance of nature’s biodiversity was also acknowledged. The existence of quality civil society mechanisms and governance processes were seen as essential to healthy societies and having a political voice was important for both governments and individuals.

Australian Conservation Foundation

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) was established in the mid-1960s, drawing on scientific, public service, business and political decision makers to commit to a healthy environment for all Australians. Its vision is 'a prosperous society in which the principles of ecological sustainability, social justice and human wellbeing are embedded in Australia's decision-making processes, in government, in business practices and in our cultures'. Its aim is to achieve ecological sustainability while ensuring social justice and equity.

What they said...

As well as environmental sustainability, the ACF noted equity, inter-generational change, subjective wellbeing, and the resourcing of environmental measurement in its submission. It stressed the importance of understanding the condition of the environment, and trends in this, particularly in relation to climate change, ecosystem health and resilience, and inland waters. In regard to environmental resource use and pressure, they highlighted the value of information about ecological footprint and resource productivity.

In the society domain, ACF highlighted the value of data about community work, cultural connection and life satisfaction. They suggested valuable measures of progress would be those that address liveability, access to environmental amenities, and connectedness with the natural world, as well as the level of protection of areas reserved for conservation, and of heritage and sacred sites. Within the economy domain, the ACF saw the value of data about working hours and overwork, and about non-market production. In terms of governance, they raised the importance of international engagement and the treatment of animals, including those kept for food production, medical research, companionship, entertainment, and so on.

Valuing non-economic aspects of life – 'One great weakness in our system of economic thought is that it often fails to recognise the worth of things, relationships and processes that aren't traded in the marketplace. By default, much of the modern practice of economics continues to assume that, where there is little or no price, there is no value. This "blind spot" in economic accounts and practice... means that many crucial environmental and social issues are effectively invisible.'

'MAP offers the chance to rectify these flaws, not only by improving the quality and presentation of environmental data, but also by rethinking and revising economic data so that it more accurately and holistically represents the systems of market and non-market production, including ecological productivity.'

A fair go – 'Most Australians believe in the basic principle of a fair go, and support efforts to ensure a level of equality of opportunity and social inclusion. Where it makes sense to do so, headline indicators should focus on those who are particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable, rather than just on national averages.'

Voiceless

Voiceless is a non-profit Australian organisation which plays a leading role in developing animal protection as a social justice movement. The organisation brings together an eminent coalition of Australians from the legal, academic, non-profit, cultural and education sectors who aim to reduce the suffering of animals. Voiceless also conducts research and analysis, and informs and empowers consumers to make animal friendly choices. They see treatment of animals as central to Australian values.

What they said...

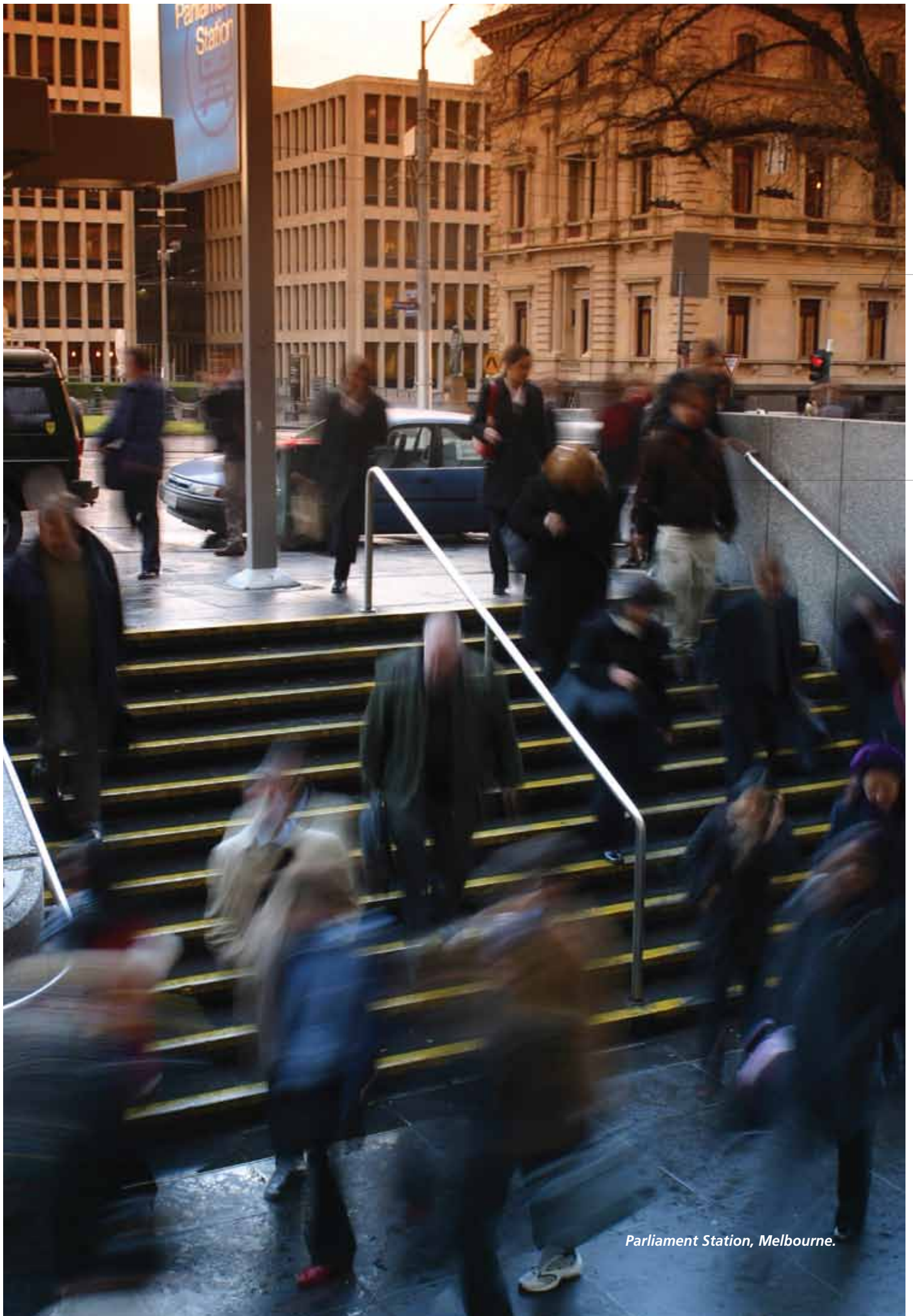
Animal cruelty – ‘Most citizens are increasingly concerned with the treatment of animals in food production, live export and wildlife “culling”. Animal protection is now an important part of Australian food culture, with many consumers aspiring for improvements in animal welfare.’

‘As Australia’s national emblem, the kangaroo is considered by most Australians as an iconic and precious animal – it is a defining symbol of our national culture. Scientists, Indigenous Australians, and increasingly the broader public have strong aspirations for improvement in animal welfare in the commercial kangaroo industry.’

‘In considering human society and culture in Australia, we must identify community values. The growth of the animal protection movement, which is now supported by many leading Australians, is indicative of wider community concern. Consumer research and increasing demand for ethically produced animal products are evidence that most Australians care about how animals are treated in food production. The scale and intensity of the public response to live export cruelty was yet another sign of community attitudes.’

‘The Australian people regard animals with compassion, and have aspirations for progress in animal protection. If this progress is to be achieved, it must be properly measured. Animal protection must therefore be included in Measures of Australia’s Progress.’





Parliament Station, Melbourne.

SECTION TWO

Consultation Results

Introduction

This section sets out the results of the ABS's consultation. These results are presented as a list of aspirational statements developed through the ABS's conversation with Australians about what is important to them for national progress; that is, their aspirations for the nation.

In order to draw together the many views and topics expressed in the consultation, we have undertaken a methodical thematic analysis of the feedback received. This process occurred at each stage of the consultation and allowed the ABS to summarise feedback, whilst remaining true to the range of ideas expressed. It also resulted in a set of aspirations that evolved and continued to be refined throughout the consultation process. In this way, the ABS hopes that the aspirations presented in this section resonate with all the consultation participants and with Australians more generally. The ABS also hopes that due to their broad nature, the aspirations will be fairly stable over time.

This section provides an explanation of how the results have been organised. The results have been structured in this hierarchical way to support a clear and logical presentation of the broad and more detailed ideas expressed by the Australian public (see figure 6.1). Descriptions of the four domains are also provided, including for the new domain of governance. Lastly, and most importantly, Australians' aspirations for national progress are provided both in summary and detailed form.

Figure 6.1: Structure of the consultation results

Structure of the consultation results

Domain	Society
Theme	Health
Aspiration	Australians aspire to good health for all
Element	Physical health Mental health and wellbeing Quality health services Healthy lifestyles Healthy environments
Progress Indicator*	To be developed

*Indicators are to be developed in the next stage

Structure of consultation results

The results are broadly organised into domains, themes, and aspirations which have a set of associated elements and a paragraph that seeks to capture the essence of the consultation conversations about that specific area of Australian life.

Domains

The results of the consultation are presented within four broad domains: society, environment, economy (current MAP domains) and governance (a new domain). Each domain is an overarching area of interest (see figure 6.1) that has been used to guide and organise the consultation process. The consultation has confirmed that these domain areas are a useful and practical way to think about overall national progress. The inclusion of governance as a domain in its own right received strong endorsement throughout various streams of the consultation.

Themes

Within each of the four domains is a list of themes. The role of the theme is to summarise the main idea contained in the aspiration attached to it. For example, in the Society Domain, the theme of ‘Australians aspire to good health for all’ is ‘Health’. The theme will determine the headline indicator that is chosen to enable the progress measurement of Australians’ health.

Aspirations

Connected to each theme is an aspirational statement. These aspirations were collated throughout the various streams of the consultation. They represent many of the voices of the consultation process and aim to reflect what Australians care about most for national progress. As far as possible, the aspirations are designed to be ambitious statements that are broadly accepted across society, and therefore fairly stable over time.

Overarching aspirations were also developed during the consultation. These were the broad statements that described the progress that Australians would like to see in the domains of society, economy, the environment and governance.

Elements

Within each aspiration statement is a list of elements. The consultation identified these elements as the most important areas to be considered when thinking about each aspiration. For example, the elements identified for the Health aspiration are Physical health, Mental health and wellbeing, Quality health services, Healthy lifestyles and Healthy environments (Figure 6.1). Each of these elements are important areas of health that Australians would want to see improvement in, however they may not represent all important aspects of this theme.

As well as a descriptive role, the elements also point towards progress measures for the aspirations. Because of this dual role, some of the elements represent a progress indicator, whilst others remain largely contextual. All will be valuable in informing the discussion around the selection of progress indicators.

Overarching aspirations for the MAP Domains and their descriptions

Australians aspire to a society that values and cares for the wellbeing of all its members

Society – primarily concerns human relationships. This encompasses the desire for good health, better living conditions and improved quality of life for all Australians. Individuals seek to achieve these for themselves, for their family, and for the communities they are part of.

Australians aspire to a strong economy that provides the opportunities and resources to support sustained individual and societal wellbeing

Economy – the system of markets (e.g. goods, money, labour markets) which can be affected by market controls (e.g. taxes and interest rates). These together generate production, stimulate consumption, and balance economic activities, so that Australia's population has access to income and wealth (in the form of assets) and the opportunity to consume goods and services.

Australians aspire to healthy natural and built environments, which they connect to, benefit from, care for and sustain for future generations

Environment – fundamental to the quality of life and sense of wellbeing of Australians, as well as providing key inputs to the economy. Increasing population and economic pressures have caused many people to be increasingly concerned about the state of both the Australian and wider global environment.

Australians aspire to a free society where governance processes are trusted and everyone is able to participate in decision making which affects their lives

Governance – systems, processes and institutions which govern, administer, protect and regulate human activity. It refers to the way in which these processes operate (e.g. how they are managed), and the inclusion of those whose lives may be affected, in decision-making activities. Good governance processes deliver efficient outcomes, are responsive and are accountable to society.

Detailed consultation results

Society



Health

Australians aspire to good health for all.

- Physical health
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Quality health services
- Healthy lifestyles
- Healthy environments

Throughout the MAP consultation, being healthy was seen as one of the most significant factors affecting an individual's wellbeing. While health conditions and disabilities will always exist, people felt that it was still possible for people to optimise their health and have a feeling of wellness. Health was seen as multidimensional, relating not just to someone's physical condition but also to their mental, emotional and social wellbeing. Lifestyle factors and the living, working, urban and natural environments were also thought to play an important role in health. The health of individuals was seen to affect relationships, particularly those relationships associated with caring for people who are ill, elderly or have disabilities. Wider societal and community wellbeing can also be influenced by health. For example, the provision of quality health care services and programs can impact community health and cohesion. Many people in the consultation saw society as having a collective responsibility to plan for the costs of providing adequate health care.

Close relationships

Australians aspire to a society that nurtures families and other close relationships that support people.

- Positive relationships
- Caring relationships
- Thriving children
- Time and opportunity
- Relationship support

This aspiration is about the benefits that people felt positive, close relationships bring to individuals and society overall. Positive relationships were seen to be caring, strong, healthy and loving ones, that function well and protect all members. They can be family relationships, which have a fundamental effect on wellbeing, or other close relationships where people care for and support one another. Many people in the consultation agreed that positive close relationships are vital for children if they are to thrive and go on to contribute to Australia's future. Of particular importance to building and maintaining positive relationships, according to participants, is the availability of time for doing this, especially during crucial times. People felt that relationships themselves could be supported by society, through services and other support mechanisms.

Home

Australians aspire to have secure places to live that provide a sense of belonging and home, and are adequate to their needs.

- Adequate housing
- Affordable housing
- Tenure
- Belonging

The consultation revealed that homes mean a great deal to people in many different ways. They provide shelter from the elements, privacy, safety from harm, and the essential infrastructure needed for living with dignity. They can also contribute to a sense of belonging, of being settled and engender feelings of pride, security and ownership. They can be central to building positive relationships and communities. For homes to provide these wellbeing and social benefits, people thought that they should be adequately constructed, sufficiently equipped and located so that services and amenities are accessible. It was also felt that homes need to be appropriate for those living in them. For example, they should cater for the different needs of people at different stages of life, their physical abilities, and their cultural context. People also thought that homes should be affordable.

Safety

Australians aspire to a society where people are safe and feel safe.

- Crime
- Safe environments
- Safety regulations and systems
- Refuge
- Feelings of safety

Australians aspire to be safe and free from physical and emotional violence, danger and harassment in their relationships, in public, while at work or in other areas of their life. People thought that this could be achieved by reducing crime, and through urban planning, workplace regulations, policing and justice systems, safe housing and other mechanisms that ensure public safety. As well as being safe, the consultation revealed that people need to feel safe in order to function well in their lives and to have places where they can take shelter if they are not safe.



Society



Learning and knowledge

Australians aspire to a society that values and enables learning.

- Early learning
- Schooling
- Further education
- Lifelong learning
- Life skills
- Research
- Inter-generational learning

Australians recognised that learning, gaining knowledge and developing skills is important throughout peoples' lives. Children's development from infancy through schooling and into higher education and training was thought to be important both to individuals in establishing their life and wellbeing, and to society overall. Society was seen to benefit from the increase in people's knowledge and abilities through increased productivity, innovation and cultural identity. This aspiration also acknowledges that basic life skills, such as literacy and numeracy, are vital to wellbeing and to full participation in society and that learning opportunities should be available for everyone. Participants thought it was important for society to support ongoing learning, whether for research, re-training or for personal development, and to support the creation of knowledge through research. The wisdom passed from one generation to another was seen to provide a crucial link across generations and to contribute to the cultural fabric and strength of society.

Community connections and diversity

Australians aspire to support each other and embrace diversity.

- Community relationships
- Community support
- Respect for difference
- Cultural activity and participation
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
- Shared identity

Australians thought it was important for individuals to feel connected with, contribute to, feel included in and valued by their community beyond their family and friends. An important aspect of this relationship was reciprocity, where people both give to and receive from the community. Connectedness was seen as something that can be built through quality interactions, for example through cultural activities, volunteering and services provided within the community. It can be evident in the shared sense of identity that communities and Australians have. Diversity was also valued, and linked with our ability to be resilient and innovative. While people may not embrace the lifestyles of others, respect for difference – whether cultural difference, social difference or one of the many other ways people differ from one another – was considered a basic Australian value. This idea of respect for difference included the value Australians place on Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

A fair go

Australians aspire to a fair society that enables everyone to meet their needs.

- Meeting basic needs
- Services
- Education, training and information
- Employment
- Income
- Infrastructure
- Assistance for vulnerable people

A strong theme throughout the MAP consultation was that all Australians should have an equal opportunity to establish, improve and maintain their wellbeing, and have access to the services and opportunities that support this. This echoes the familiar Australian tradition of egalitarianism. It includes the ability of people to meet their basic needs, build their capabilities, gain income through employment and access information. It also relates to the quality and availability of infrastructure such as transport, which underpins these activities. The idea of an equal opportunity, or a fair go, was seen as particularly important for those who are at vulnerable points in their lives or who are marginalised or disadvantaged.

Enriched lives

Australians aspire to value all aspects of life that are important to people and enrich their lives.

- Feelings
- Giving
- Time and opportunity
- Recreation and sport
- Popular culture and the arts
- Spirituality

Many aspects of life that increase wellbeing and make life worthwhile are not material but are intangible. Many participants in the consultation wanted to acknowledge that these factors are important in people's lives. For example, many felt that emotions can be as important to people's sense of wellbeing as their material conditions, and acts of altruism or caring can positively affect both the giver and receiver. Music, dance, art, poetry, film and the many forms of popular culture can bring depth and joy to peoples' lives, and clarify our values and identity as individuals and as a nation. Australians have a love of sport and the outdoors, and value the bonding, relaxation and insights that leisure time pursuits bring. People felt their connections with one another, with their pets and with nature; their sense of a higher purpose, their deeper beliefs and motivations; and their sense of identity and cultural heritage; can enrich their lives and our society as a whole.

Economy



Opportunities

Australians aspire to have the economic opportunities they need to thrive.

- Employment
- Business
- Standard of living
- Capabilities
- Reduced complexity

Many people in the consultation recognised the importance of the economy in increasing the wellbeing of Australians. This was understood as people having the opportunities, means and ability to have a high standard of living and lead the kind of life they want and choose to live. This may include people having employment or business opportunities, income, services, skills and knowledge to secure their wellbeing and the wellbeing of their loved ones. At the same time, people thought that the economy, or aspects of it, should not represent barriers in the pursuit of wellbeing, for example by making information or procedures unnecessarily complex or difficult.

Jobs

Australians aspire to an economy that provides them with quality jobs.

- Income
- Job satisfaction
- Flexible arrangements
- Safe and healthy working conditions
- Effective industrial relations environment

Many in the consultation said that paid work is important to people's lives, to the economy and to society overall. It was seen to provide individuals with income, a sense of identity and purpose and a way they can contribute to society. Paid employment is closely linked with economic growth and is the basis of societal productivity and resourcefulness. This aspiration sees a successful economy as one that provides jobs that ensure people's safety, their right to fair treatment and protection, a sense of economic security and an effective industrial relations environment. People thought that quality jobs also allow people to balance their work life with other commitments, provide adequate pay for work done, and are rewarding in a non-material sense.

Economy

Prosperity

Australians aspire to a prosperous and efficient economy.

- Efficient workforce
- Efficient use of resources
- Access to resources
- Innovation for efficiency
- Competition
- Effective regulation

An aspiration that recurred during the consultation was that the Australian economy continues to thrive and function well. This included having an economy that uses both labour and other resources efficiently, that is able to access the right resources needed for production purposes at the right time without impediment, that can improve the productivity of work processes (for example by harnessing new technology) and can compete in an increasingly globalised marketplace. Many thought that economic efficiency relied on well-constructed regulation that helps rather than hinders this functioning.

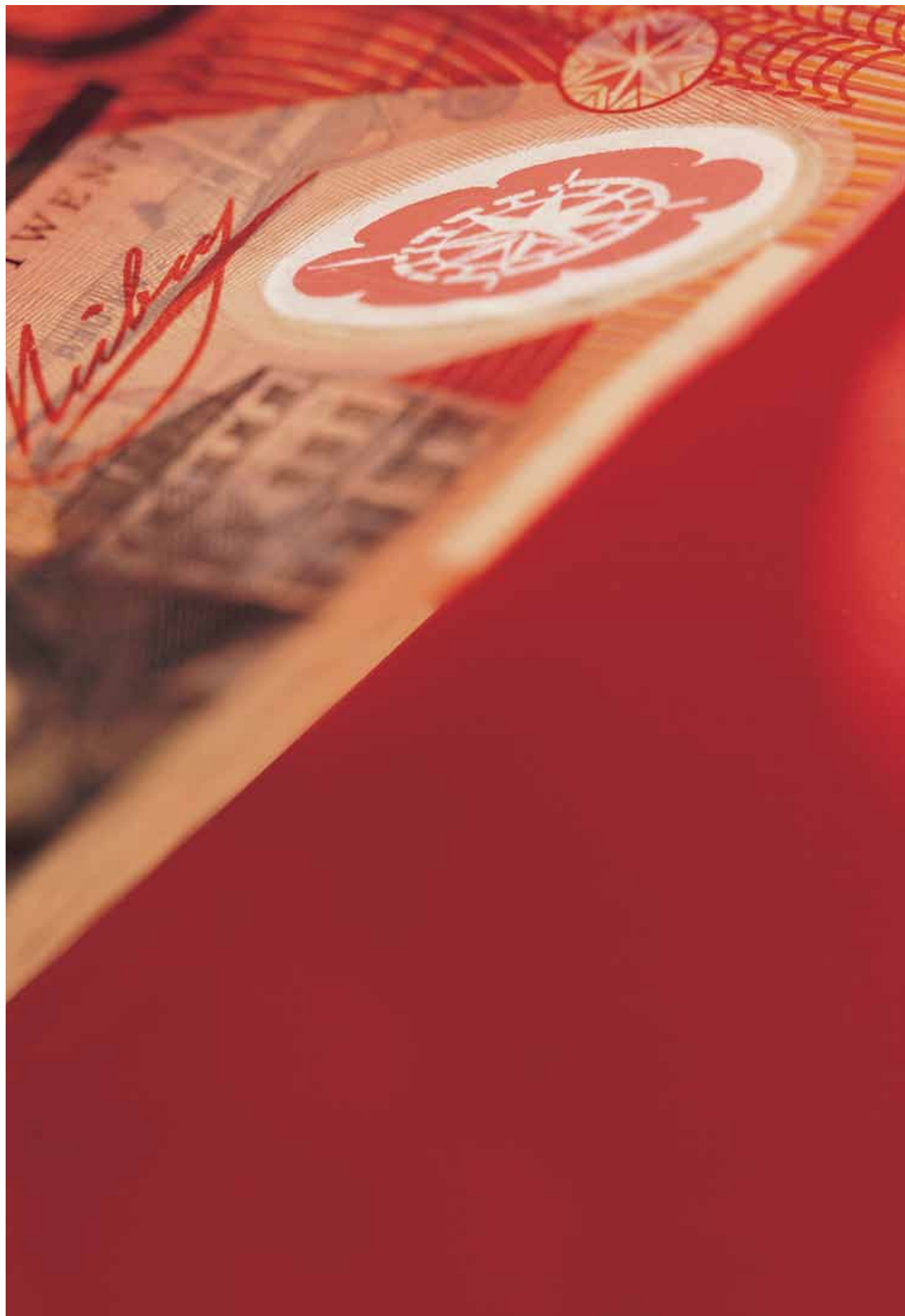
A resilient economy

Australians aspire to an economy in which people can manage risk and be resilient to shocks.

- Flexibility
- Insurance
- Stability
- Prudent financial sector
- Information

In response to recent global economic downturns and natural disasters, many in the consultation aspired to an economy able to cope with unexpected crises and to maintain a good standard of living for Australians. This included an economy able to be flexible in its responses and in the way in which it can draw on resources, so that it is protected against risk. People also said it involves having a broad level of economic stability that enables the building up of resources that can be used in a crisis. Having knowledge of vulnerabilities and opportunities within the economy was also seen as important.





A sustainable economy

Australians aspire to an economy that sustains or enhances living standards into the future.

- Buying power
- Government finances
- Economic resources
- Environmental resources
- Human resources
- Innovation for change

Sustaining economic performance over the long term was seen as important. During the consultation, people said they wanted an economy that meets the needs of Australians today without compromising the needs of future generations. They felt this may mean sustaining the resources, services and infrastructure that underpin social functioning, and protecting, managing and using these sustainably. People thought innovation was important in an economy to improve productivity and to find solutions to economic, social and environmental challenges.

Fair outcomes

Australians aspire to an economy that supports fair outcomes.

- Living standards
- Equity
- Disadvantage
- Shared contribution and responsibility

A recurring aspiration was the idea of ensuring all Australians shared equitably in economic progress. People were concerned about disadvantage and inequality and wanted to ensure all Australians had basic standards of living. This was expressed in terms of people having opportunities for improving their wellbeing, regardless of differences in education, socioeconomic background or other factors. An important aspect of this aspiration was that individuals, the government and private sectors should share responsibility in contributing to these balanced economic outcomes.

International economic engagement

Australians aspire to fruitful economic engagement with the rest of the world.

- Development and maintenance of trade relationships
- Migration and tourism
- Uphold international responsibilities and cooperation
- Sharing of knowledge and ideas

Australia is a part of the global economy. While there were different ideas on what international economic engagement would look like, many people saw it as a positive thing for Australia. Positive interactions may include trade relationships or Australia being a destination for visitors and migrants. They might also involve Australia being open to giving and receiving ideas and sharing knowledge and experience. It also includes Australia's response to its international economic obligations and responsibilities.

Environment



Healthy natural environment

Australians aspire to a healthy natural environment.

- Biodiversity
- Land and vegetation
- Rivers, lakes and ground water
- Oceans and estuaries
- Air and atmosphere
- Forests

A thriving natural environment benefits all human life. A strong theme in this consultation was that Australians want their environment to become healthier rather than degraded over time. This includes improving the health of all the components of the environment.

Appreciating the environment

Australians aspire to appreciate the natural environment and people's connection with it.

- Understanding the environment's intrinsic value
- Understanding the environment's economic value
- Access to and availability of nature areas
- Cultural connections
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to country
- Quality information

Participants in the consultation wanted the natural environment valued in many ways. People depend on the environment; it provides us with air, water, food, shelter and other things that we need to live. The environment was thought to contribute to the economy by providing resources and supporting industries. People saw it as particularly important that the value of the environment is taken into account when decisions are made that might affect it and that access to information is crucial in supporting this. Part of appreciating the environment is having access to the opportunities it provides for enjoyment, reflection and inspiration. The environment was seen to have different meaning for different people. For example, it is an iconic aspect of our national identity, as expressed in images of Australian beaches and landscapes. At an individual and community level, people recognised that connections to land and places hold meaning for many, such as the spiritual connection felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to country. For many people the environment was seen to have value in its own right, not only because it enriches human life.

Protecting the environment

Australians aspire to care for and protect our natural environment.

- Protect
- Prevent and minimise further damage
- Restore
- Effective programs

Many in the consultation were concerned with how people look after the environment. They aspired to protect, care for and avoid further damage to the environment, for example through protecting native flora, fauna, and wilderness areas. This was seen to involve careful management and restorative measures that improve the state of the environment and support its ability to function healthily. Throughout the consultation, there was strong support for the idea that caring for the environment can occur through individual or group initiatives and through business and government programs.

Sustaining the environment

Australians aspire to manage the environment sustainably for future generations.

- Natural resources
- Land use
- Water use
- Waste management
- Adaptive technology
- Adaption strategies
- Climate change

Acting to sustain the natural environment and its resources for the long term was a strong recurring theme in the consultation and was considered important to business, government, communities and society. People felt that how we use the environment's resources affects our wellbeing and the wellbeing of future generations. In relation to this, people talked about the importance of environmental resources that provide the basis for food and industrial production. They also discussed the development of adaptive technologies and strategies to enable environmental sustainability. Many thought it was important to be aware of the impact of human activities or lifestyles on the environment, particularly those that either moderate resource depletion or threaten long term sustainability.





Healthy built environments

Australians aspire to healthy built environments.

- Quality built environment
- People friendly
- Cultural and heritage friendly
- Access to natural areas
- Ecologically friendly
- Access to services and amenities

Close to two-thirds of Australians live in our capital cities, with many more living in other urban centres. On a daily basis, people use buildings, roads and pathways, transport systems, sewage systems, parks and other built environments. A strong theme of the consultation was the importance of the liveability of urban environments. For example, people were concerned that built environments are well planned, provide adequate housing and access to services, and are healthy and safe. People also felt that these environments should be somewhere that people enjoy living and being, and that they support positive social interaction and inclusion. Built environments have practical value, as well as heritage, social and aesthetic aspects which contribute to wellbeing. People aspired to be able to support the health of the natural environment both within their urban setting and beyond.

Working together

Australians aspire for government, business and communities to work together locally and globally for a healthy environment.

- Participation
- Alignment
- Collaboration
- Shared responsibility
- International

Many people in the MAP consultation saw achieving a healthy environment as a collective effort. They felt that the natural environment affects everyone, and that all people, groups, businesses and nations have a responsibility to participate in protecting it. In caring for and sustaining the environment, they hoped for alignment between the different levels of government, for collaboration and linking across public and private activities and initiatives, and for international cooperation.

Governance



Trust

Australians aspire to institutions and processes they can trust and hold to account.

- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Trust in governance processes and systems

People felt governance systems and processes needed to be open, honest, unbiased and trusted by society. This related to both government and non-government bodies. People wanted governance processes to be free from corruption, favouritism and conflict of interest. They wanted government and private institutions to behave responsibly and with integrity in support of societal wellbeing. Where governance processes impact on society, people wanted information about this to be transparent to the public.

Effective governance

Australians aspire to governance that works well.

- Effective governance
- Ease of interactions
- Protection
- Seamless services
- Balance between regulation and freedom
- Resilience

Good governance and regulation, within both government and non-government sectors, was seen as an important means to national progress. People felt that good governance is effective and efficient. Many people in the consultation wanted the systems, processes and institutions that govern and regulate our activity, and protect our rights and freedoms, to be easy for people to access and interact with. They also wanted governance to be appropriate and to allow effective outcomes without overburdening people or institutions. People aspired to have their governance systems aligned, working together and adequately funded. They also wanted governance systems, processes and institutions to be strong and yet adaptable to change and to enable Australian society to bounce back from adversity.

Participation

Australians aspire to have the opportunity to have a say in decisions that affect their lives.

- Involvement in decision making
- Awareness and understanding
- Access and opportunity
- Taking responsibility

People saw it as important that everyone has the opportunity to participate in decision-making that affects their lives. People thought that participation was important at all levels of society, from formal interactions, such as with government or business sectors, to community level interactions. People felt they could participate in how society is managed by attending community groups, talking or writing to politicians, signing petitions, voting, and in many other ways. Participation in decision-making was also seen as a personal responsibility. For example, voting in elections was seen as

important and therefore something Australians are required to do. For people to become involved in decision-making and governance, they need access to the information and places that support this. People discussed the value of participating in genuine consultation, where all peoples' voices are heard, well considered and responded to. They also thought that timely decision-making undertaken by elected representatives was important and appropriate. Consultation processes were valuable and complementary to these decision-making initiatives.

Informed public debate

Australians aspire to well-informed and vibrant public debate.

- Open and informed debate
- Freedom to pursue and access truth/facts
- A free media
- Effective regulation

People in the consultation thought that public debate should allow a diversity of voices and views to be heard and considered, and that information should be reported accurately, clearly and not be biased by conflicts of interest. They saw public debate as occurring in many places, for example, through the media and electronic information sharing channels, as well as parliamentary and political debating platforms. For this to happen effectively, they thought that these platforms should be effectively regulated whilst allowing people the freedom to access information.

Peoples' rights and responsibilities

Australians aspire to a society where everyone's rights are upheld and their responsibilities fulfilled.

- Rights and responsibilities upheld
- National laws and standards
- Access to justice
- Freedom of expression
- International conventions and laws

People felt that the rights and responsibilities of Australians, as defined and protected by national laws, were important. They also thought that international human rights conventions were important and relevant. Many people in the consultation aspired to have their rights upheld by Australian governance systems, and wanted justice systems and processes to be fair and accessible to all Australians. They saw this as a reciprocal relationship, with everyone having the responsibility to abide by Australia's laws. People in the consultation also valued Australia's democratic system of representational government as a means of ensuring rights and responsibilities are upheld.

Summary consultation results

Society

Health

Australians aspire to good health for all.

Close relationships

Australians aspire to a society that nurtures families and other close relationships that support people.

Home

Australians aspire to have secure places to live that provide a sense of belonging and home, and are adequate to their needs.

Safety

Australians aspire to a society where people are safe and feel safe.

Learning and knowledge

Australians aspire to a society that values and enables learning.

Community connections and diversity

Australians aspire to support each other and embrace diversity.

A fair go

Australians aspire to a fair society that enables everyone to meet their needs.

Enriched lives

Australians aspire to value all aspects of life that are important to people and enrich their lives.

Economy

Opportunities

Australians aspire to have the economic opportunities they need to thrive.

Jobs

Australians aspire to an economy that provides them with quality jobs.

Prosperity

Australians aspire to a prosperous and efficient economy.

A resilient economy

Australians aspire to an economy in which people can manage risk and be resilient to shocks.

A sustainable economy

Australians aspire to an economy that sustains or enhances living standards into the future.

Fair outcomes

Australians aspire to an economy that supports fair outcomes.

International economic engagement

Australians aspire to fruitful economic engagement with the rest of the world.

Environment

Healthy natural environment

Australians aspire to a healthy natural environment.

Appreciating the environment

Australians aspire to appreciate the natural environment and people's connection with it.

Protecting the environment

Australians aspire to care for and protect our natural environment.

Sustaining the environment

Australians aspire to manage the environment sustainably for future generations.

Healthy built environments

Australians aspire to healthy built environments.

Working together

Australians aspire for government, business and communities to work together locally and globally for a healthy environment.

101

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

Governance

Trust

Australians aspire to institutions and processes they can trust and hold to account

Effective governance

Australians aspire to governance that works well.

Participation

Australians aspire to have the opportunity to have a say in decisions that affect their lives.

Informed public debate

Australians aspire to well-informed and vibrant public debate.

Peoples' rights and responsibilities

Australians aspire to a society where everyone's rights are upheld and their responsibilities fulfilled.



SECTION THREE

Supporting Material

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACF	Australian Conservation Foundation
ACIN	Australian Community Indicators Network
ACOLA	Australian Council of Learned Academies
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANDI	Australian National Development Index
AO	Order of Australia
ASIC	Australian Securities and Investments Commission
Aust.	Australia
AYF	Australian Youth Forum
BCA	Business Council of Australia
CIQ	Community Indicators Queensland
CIV	Community Indicators Victoria
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DSEWPac	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
ERG	Expert Reference Group
EU	European Union
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
GBCA	Green Building Council of Australia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
IBCA	Indigenous Business Council of Australia
IHEAC	Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council
MAP	Measures of Australia's Progress
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MONET	Monitoring of Sustainable Development in Switzerland
nef	new economics foundation
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OAM	Medal of the Order of Australia

ABBREVIATIONS

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Qld	Queensland
ONS	Office of National Statistics (United Kingdom)
SA	South Australia
SoE	State of the Environment
TAP	Topic Advisory Panel
Tas.	Tasmania
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VC	Victoria Cross
Vic.	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1.1 MAP 2012 dashboard
- Figure 1.2 MAP ERG membership list
- Figure 1.3 MAP consultation model
- Figure 1.4 MAP consultation channel overview
- Figure 1.5 MAP consultation process and milestones
- Figure 1.6 MAP consultation results - domains and themes
- Figure 2.1 Image of Lauren Jackson
- Figure 2.2 'Can I quote you on that?' - Judy Horacek
- Figure 2.3 Australian Youth Forum Facebook page
- Figure 2.4 'Women' - Reconciliation Place
- Figure 2.5 'Robert Lee' - Reconciliation Place
- Figure 3.1 ABS staff at the MAP consultation forum
- Figure 4.1 Australian indicator projects
- Figure 5.1 'The Graph' - Michael Leunig
- Figure 5.2 International indicator projects
- Figure 5.3 Gallup World Path to Progress
- Figure 5.4 Mandala of wellbeing, Canadian Index of Wellbeing
- Figure 5.5 The 'How's Life?' framework for measuring wellbeing and progress
- Figure 6.1 Structure of the consultation results

Appendix A – TAP participants

Social

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Organisation

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Sue Richardson	Flinders University
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Jon Nicholson	Westpac
Bob Gregory	Australian National University
David Gruen	Treasury

Environment

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Peter Cosier	Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists
Chrissy Grant	Chair Indigenous Advisory Committee
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Tom Hatton	CSIRO

Governance

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John Pritchard	Australian Local Government Association
Meredith Edwards	University of Canberra

Please note: A number of ABS subject matter experts and other contributors participated in the discussions. Also, DSEWPac representatives attended all TAP meetings as observers.

Appendix B – Regional office workshop comments

Note: The material in this appendix reflects the views expressed at the regional workshops. It is included in the interests of transparency and does not necessarily represent the views of the ABS.

Aspirations for social progress

Everyone has access to services, infrastructure and support

Everyone has (safe) access to good quality services (health, education, employment, support, transport, childcare and parenting support, retirement and elderly care services, technology)

Everyone has equal access to social infrastructure – such as sport, education, health

Everyone has access to the legal system/services, which do not discriminate against anyone

Service delivery is prioritised to those most in need and personalised

Our society provides support for carers of all kinds – parents, disability and elderly care

Smaller medical centres cater for smaller areas

Our infrastructure supports increasing population health (sewers, clean drinking water)

Everyone has access to affordable and appropriate housing

Our health system provides for those with unpreventable/incurable health problems

Our society addresses disadvantage

Our society improves conditions of people who are disadvantaged, marginalised or need help

We take into account the least well-off and vulnerable groups or regions when assessing national progress (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, low income, non-capital city residents)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples enjoy an equal quality of life - empowered to fully participate in society

Children are safe from all forms of abuse and not living in situations where they are vulnerable

Our society provides basic human needs for everyone (shelter, human rights)

The wealth gap is decreasing – both actually and in terms of social perceptions

No Australian is disadvantaged due to race, sexuality, gender, religion, culture, geography

Our society is equitable, inclusive and tolerant

In our society, social position does not determine wellbeing or education, and people have freedom, choice and the opportunity to move beyond the situation they were born into

Because not everyone starts out equal, we support people so society has equitable outcomes

Everybody has the opportunity to participate in society and reach their potential

Culture, inclusion, acceptance and tolerance are valued by our society

Society values and celebrates vibrant cultural diversity: it's safe to practice your cultural practices

Our communities value individuals and their contributions

People enjoy the right to live their lives within reasonable boundaries in a tolerant society

Equity in education supports equity in society

Everyone has equal access to education, giving them the opportunity to achieve their desired level of education, and enabling them to live full and productive lives and meet societal needs

Everyone has the basic skills to communicate and participate in society (literacy and numeracy)

Our education system expands and fulfils people's aspirations

Our education system highlights opportunities for, and finds ways to include, people who may not otherwise be encouraged to attend higher education

All children meet their education potential

People have feelings of wellbeing and the opportunity to enhance this

People are happy, content and satisfied with their lives, and have positive mental health

People understand how to achieve positive mental health and wellbeing (education)

People and communities are resilient, and are enabled to become resilient

People feel safe in public, at home, and in terms of national security

People have trust in social institutions

People have a good quality of life, work-life balance, free time for their interests and activities

We enjoy a rich and diverse cultural life

People are empowered to improve their lives, with welfare dependence minimised

People have confidence in the future

Our society encourages engagement, connectivity and creativity

Our society has a high level of social capital (trust, engagement, connectivity, cohesion)

There are effective connections between people within communities and across society

We have strong, effective and supported community centres

Our society is creative and resilient

Communities and services are planned with children's safety and wellbeing in mind

Our society optimises the health of the population

Society embraces a holistic approach to health, optimising people's wellbeing across mind (intellect, learning), body (health, mental health), heart (relationships) and soul (spirituality)

Our health system improves public health and prevents public health problems

Where possible, people are free from pain and disease, for increased wellbeing

We not only live longer but enjoy a greater quality of life

Both effective public services and individual actions lead to a healthier population

Australians live healthy lifestyles, and increasingly understand their health and how to optimise it

We are enabled (e.g. via information) to take action on possible future population health issues

People are able to get medical attention quickly when needed

Our society values and supports carers of all kinds – parents, disability and elderly carers

A healthy environment ensures a healthy population

We value the environment as it impacts on health, psychological, and societal wellbeing
Societal norms (standard of living/housing) are in keeping with sustainability imperatives

Aspirations for economic progress

A stable and resilient economy

Our economy is secure, self-sustaining, robust in the context of international fluctuations
The economy is stable, focusing on smoothing peaks and troughs, not just growth and profit
Our economy is flexible/resilient, catering for unforeseen shocks/events e.g. disasters, drought
We have sufficient infrastructure to support our economic activity
Debt does not endanger the stability of the economy

A diverse and innovative economy

Our economy is diverse, with a broad-based workforce distributed across sectors and a mix of industries (not reliant on single industries such as mining)
Our economy is innovative across all sectors, focusing on innovation, entrepreneurship, emerging technologies, and high-end value-adding industries
We invest in research and development: innovation in new technologies supports the balancing of economic and environmental goals, especially in mining, agricultural, and energy production
Business confidence is high

An efficient and productive economy

Our economy is efficient and effective in meeting the needs of a growing population
The economy is increasingly productive and efficient, with wastage reducing (e.g. food, energy wastage)
We have thriving productive systems – market, non-market (caring) and natural (regeneration)
The tax system is efficient and modern, so no 'churn' taxes are returned to tax payers
Positive economic growth is maintained
Economic regulation is effective, without unnecessary levels of political interference

An economy able to cater for future needs

The economy caters for future needs, e.g. appropriately valuing and accounting for sustainable practices, environmental services and assets (e.g. the Great Barrier Reef), and loss/depletion of natural resources
Economic and environmental goals are balanced, with sustainable use of natural resources – economic growth is not at the expense of social or environmental flourishing
We have sustainable levels of imports and exports
The economy manages the detrimental effects of rapidly changing technology, e.g. by valuing products across their whole life cycle (including post obsolescence)
The job market is sustainable, e.g. through increasing manufacturing
We manage funds and resources to support an ageing population

An ethical economy

Our economy encourages ethical activity and high standards of quality and safety

There is effective regulation against unethical market activity

Governance of economic activity is ethical, ensuring people are not pushed to behave in ways counter to their needs or social health

An internationally integrated and competitive economy

The Australian economy is integrated with the world economy, contributing to global stability and increasing Australia's economic resilience/reducing risk

Our economy is internationally competitive, and innovative developments stay in Australia e.g. solar

Our economy focuses on areas of comparative advantage relative to other countries

Import and export opportunities are enhanced

Our economy promotes quality of life, which in turn supports economic health

The economy supports quality of life and work/life balance, reducing overwork and underemployment (including reducing travel to work time)

We invest in health prevention/education rather than treatment for long term economic benefit

National economic policy reflects community aspirations

There is reducing personal debt supporting increased wellbeing

We recognise that increasing wealth is not the only path to increasing wellbeing

Our economy supports greater economic equity

The economy ensures a universal minimum standard of living and access to basic human needs (food, shelter/housing, security, healthcare, and social needs)

There is no poverty in our society and families at risk are targeted for economic support

Wealth, income, resources are distributed equitably and inequity in distribution is decreasing

The economy accounts for needs of all groups and provides a higher standard of living for all

Work is equally distributed

The economy operates for the common good

There is improving financial literacy among the population

Everyone has access to fresh food

Everyone has access to affordable housing, including associated living and transport costs

Regional and local economies flourish, focusing on 'not falling behind' rather than competing

Everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in, benefit from, and share costs of growth

There is a safety net for those who need economic support

There is a supported culture of philanthropy, both at the personal and industrial/business level

The contribution of different sectors to economic growth is fully understood and transparent

People have meaningful work and their skills meet the demands of the economy

People have the opportunity and capability to participate in quality, meaningful work (paid/unpaid)

People are employed in their area of expertise and/or interest

Australians have the education and skills/training to adequately supply our workforce

Our workforce is appropriately skilled and utilises human assets effectively

The economy enhances the stock of skills available in the population

Labour force participation is maximised

Skill supply and education flows are managed to match changing economic conditions

Social and public services are valued

Caring and educational services are valued more highly in the economy, with greater income equity across occupations and reducing the mismatch of income to social value in occupations

There is less reliance on volunteers, and on increasing volunteering, to cater for social needs

Our public services are supported by the economy

Our governments are financially sustainable

The economy values social assets and unpaid work

Aspirations for environmental progress

People increasingly understand and value the environment

Australians value and protect the natural environment, recognising its connection to wellbeing

There is increasing public education about, and awareness of, the environment, human impact on the environment, and economic and other benefits of environmental initiatives and assets e.g. Great Barrier Reef

The natural environment is valued in its own right

We have credible information about the environment that is locally relevant

We take pride and value in our environment's history and heritage, valuing heritage areas and protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritages and other cultural environments

We treat animals ethically and humanely

People are able to connect to the natural environment

People feel connected to the environment (anthropocentric view) and take responsibility for it

We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection with the land, and incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander environmental perspectives in to our practices, e.g. sacred land

Everyone has access to green/open spaces/parks/recreation areas/meeting places

Everyone has access to clean and health air and water and ecosystems – free of pollution

Our energy and environmental programs and initiatives are affordable and accessible for all

Built environments enhance social connectivity and wellbeing

Built environments enhance/nurture/support social connectivity, health and wellbeing

Urban environments are liveable, with more plants, trees and green spaces

We value the heritage and social benefits of existing built environments, civic spaces and businesses, using what we have efficiently rather than developing new environments

People work together on environmental issues

Environmental efforts are coordinated nationally (local, regional, state, national)

We have conversations with traditional owners of the land and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives.

There is increasing awareness of and collaboration on international environmental issues

Local, national and international environmental issues are addressed in a coherent way

Information about the environment is coherent (not contradictory)

We have clear environmental targets for people to work towards

The diversity of our environmental and local conditions is recognised

Environmental programs cater for local conditions/ecosystems and don't impact local growth

Sentinel and unique areas are taken into account in our environmental choices and actions

Our activities are sustainable and do not impact negatively on the environment

Human activity and use of natural resources is sustainable and prioritised (across air, land, water, waste)

We increasingly use recycling (including composting) for waste, water and inorganics

No further loss of biodiversity and decreasing endangering/extinction of species

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' environmental perspective are incorporated into our practices e.g. sustainable land use

We have sustainable transport systems with a decreasing need for people to commute to work

Our environment is clean and healthy

We have a clean healthy atmosphere – pollution, greenhouse gas emissions (CO2 pollution) and waste reducing or minimised (zero waste)

Our waterways/oceans/ground water systems are healthy, support biodiversity and fish populations (e.g. we use aquaculture rather than native fish), provide environmental services and clean, high quality drinking/agricultural water, and are used efficiently

We have healthy resilient land/soil to support biodiversity and agriculture, with effective pest management, green belts/corridors/zero erosion

We repair damage to the natural environment

The environment is being rehabilitated and improved – past unsustainable changes remediated

We increasingly regenerate habitat and biodiversity and re-forest our land

Greenhouse gasses are reduced to pre-industrial levels

Soil quality is improving

The way in which we produce energy and develop is sustainable

Natural resources are used sustainably, with no energy debt into the future

We have sustainable populations, regional centres and agriculture

Our energy supply is efficient, affordable and sustainable, with increasing use of renewable energy, and decreasing dependence on non-sustainable resources such as fossil fuel

The built environment is developed sustainably and with a view to enhancing social connections

We have affordable, environmentally friendly, self-sustaining housing (for energy, water, food)

We are prepared for change in the natural environment

We have future security of natural resources – food, water, quality of air etc.

We can adapt to change in the natural environment because we have effective infrastructure, technology, education, innovation, governance, and community connectivity/response

We have adequate food and develop a self-sufficiency in relation to food production

We are able to respond to climate change and natural disasters

Aspirations for governance progress

Everyone is enabled to participate in decision-making processes

Citizens are supported to participate 'beyond the ballot box' in all levels of government, society and community, e.g. through education, opportunities/forums, and a culture of participation

Everyone has equitable access to decision-making processes and the mechanisms of government, and these are well understood

Government is inclusive/consultative – people and their views are represented well and equitably

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are able to vote for their own representatives with no hurdles to voting

Communities are able to shape their community and influence decisions that apply to them

We are a nation of independent thinkers, who are enabled to challenge government decisions

The different levels of government are clearly defined and work together

There is clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the three levels of government, with the scope of influence of each level agreed upon and defined to enable certainty and stability

Everyone understands the different roles/responsibilities of the three levels of government

There is collaboration and alignment between the three spheres of government

National and state government also functions at the local level, reflects the needs of local government areas, and supports community based programs

We have strong local government with wide decision-making powers in local issues, and with the capacity to implement the policies they are required to deliver

Human rights are understood and upheld

Human rights, remedies and obligations are better understood by both citizens and authorities, are incorporated in to Australian law and these rights protected

People feel protected – from lawlessness, exploitation, poverty

People enjoy the right to live their life within reasonable societal boundaries

Our governance recognises freedom of expression and we have a free press and media

There is an appropriate balance between protection of rights and government intrusion

Everyone is treated equally and equitably by our governance systems

Everyone is treated fairly and equitably – there is no disparity in the way people are treated

Everyone has equal access to the law and it applies to and protects all Australians equally

Fundamental human rights apply to everyone in our society

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and local government are recognised in the Australian constitution

There is equal access in planning and delivery government services

Multicultural populations and diversity is recognised at a local and other government levels

Governments and institutions are transparent, accountable and effective

Government, public institutions, civil and social institutions and companies are accountable

There is well founded trust/confidence in public and private institutions and economic players

Our government is sensible and hierarchical and manages programs efficiently and effectively

We have fair and free elections and a fair and transparent judiciary

A free press is balanced with accountability/diverse media ownership, for quality and balance

Clear separation of powers (government, industry, workers, judiciary) to avoid vested interest

All levels of government are modern and capable and have resources to function effectively

The authorities in our society are brave enough to search for the truth

Our governance mechanisms provide for our future

Government is forward looking and supports future planning despite a short election cycle

A long term view and leadership in governance of environmental issues, with environmental audits on all government policy, and decision-makers who value the environment

The constitution is dynamic, incorporating contemporary issues – our governance is adaptable

Australia is a responsible, modern international citizen and leader in the international arena

Appendix C – Findings of TAP1 and material provided to forum

Note: The material in this appendix reflects the views expressed at the first round of TAP meetings. It is included in the interests of transparency and does not necessarily represent the views of the ABS.

Aspirations for social progress

Australians aspire to a society that values, cares for, and provides opportunity for all its members, optimising their wellbeing.

1. Health

Australians aspire to a society that optimises population health – emotional, mental and physical – and both the length and quality of lives

Elements
Emotional
Physical
Mental
Intellectual
<i>and (for all the above)</i>
Health systems and services (including carers)
Prevention (of poor health) and education (empowerment)
Healthy lifestyles (responsibility)
Health outcomes

2. Equity and opportunity

Australians aspire to a society where all members are enabled, and not disadvantaged, in realising and expanding their potential and aspirations

Elements
Education and training (skills and knowledge)
Employment
Economic resources (income, housing)
Services
Access to and engagement with all the above (removal of barriers to)
Social inclusion
Assistance for disadvantaged
Acknowledgement/measurement of disadvantage

3. Close relationships

Australians aspire to a society that nurtures the close relationships between people that provide support for individuals, especially at crucial times.

Elements

- Quality of support from families/other support networks
- Support for families
- Time spent on close relationships
- Relationship education
- Relationship support services

4. Safety and security

Australians aspire to a society where people feel, and are, safe and secure

Elements

- Crime rates
- Perceptions of safety
- Criminal justice system (quality, people involved in)
- National security

5. Social connection and community resilience

Australians aspire to a resilient society with healthy communities and social connections

Elements

- Social capital including:
 - Volunteering, community, civil society (participation and support for)
 - Social/community connections, social support mechanisms
- Trust
- Services and infrastructure (quality and access)
(health, employment, education, legal, government and non-government)
- Creativity and innovation
- Preparation for future change (population, climate, economic, etc)

6. Cohesion and diversity

Australians aspire to a cohesive society that celebrates diversity

Elements

Attitudes to difference

Cultural activity/participation

Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples

Endangered cultural practices (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages)

7. Non-material aspects of life

Australians aspire to a society that values non-material aspects of life – such as family, caring, culture, connection to the environment, and feelings about life – as much as material aspects of life

Elements

Subjective wellbeing (e.g. feelings of contentment, satisfaction, happiness, wellbeing, autonomy)

Unpaid work, carers and the caring professions

Leisure time (work/non-work balance)

Culture and the arts

Environment (connection to, impact on wellbeing)

Spirituality

Aspirations for economic progress

Australians aspire to an economy that provides individuals with opportunities and economic resources, and develops their capabilities, so they can maintain or increase their wellbeing.

Relationship between society and economy	In the context of this MAP consultation, the economy is positioned as a system arising out of society and enabling societal progress.
Key ideas	Amartya Sen's notion that the economy ideally provides individuals with the opportunities and capabilities to choose the life they have reason to value
Broad structure	i) What the economy provides ii) How it might do this iii) Within what contexts

1. Opportunities, resources and capabilities

Australians aspire to an economy that provides individuals with opportunities and economic resources, and develops their capabilities, so they can maintain or increase their wellbeing

Elements

- Employment (availability, quality)
- Education (including financial literacy)
- Housing (e.g. accessibility)
- Disposable income (adequacy)
- Availability of goods and services
- Capital markets (effectiveness, efficiency)
- Imports/exports (a globally open economy)
- Social wellbeing (as per Social progress aspirations)

2. Employment

Australians aspire to an economy that provides high quality jobs

Elements

- Workplace amenity
- Satisfaction/fulfilment (meaningful work)
- Match of capability and interest to job
- Autonomy
- Workloads and hours (manageable)
- Workplace flexibility (family friendly)
- Safety (e.g. physical, freedom from harassment/bullying/discrimination)
- Development opportunities
- Economic gain vs. cost of attending work (e.g. commute times, quality)
- Quality of skill supply to workforce
- Labour force participation
- Labour market flexibility

3. Resilience

Australians aspire to an economy that is resilient and helps to mitigate risk and shocks: both personal and societal

<p>Elements – societal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Macroeconomic stabilitySecurity of markets (job, housing)Infrastructure (efficiency, adequacy)Insurance (effectiveness, adequacy,Macroeconomic debt (manageability)World trade (international context)Resource management (climate change, population ageing, sustainability)Diversity of industry	<p>Elements – personal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Job securityHome ownershipSavings (adequate)Personal insurance (income, home, health, affordability)Personal debt (manageable)
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121

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

4. Sustainably

Australians aspire to an economy that is sustainable – maintaining or increasing its ability to provide for future generations

<p>Elements – sustainability of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Societal wellbeing (future generations)Natural environmentImport/export marketsDisposable income and wealthReal value of wages/salariesAvailability of goodsValuing/accounting for environmental resources (products valued across life cycle)

5. Productively and efficiently

Australians aspire to an economy that is productive and efficient, minimising complexity

<p>Elements – efficiency of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">ProductivityCapital marketsWorkforce participationImport/export marketsDisposable income (maintenance of)Real value of wages/salaries	<p>Elements – reduce complexity of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Financial services or systemsTelecommunications services or systemsTransport services or systemsOther govt or private services or systemsWelfare services or systemsAged care services or systemsLegislation and regulationsTax system
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6. Ethically and equitably

Australians aspire to an economy that is ethical and equitable – distributing opportunity and resources to minimise disadvantage or exclusion

Elements – Equitable

- Basic human needs met (food, shelter, health)
- Poverty and disadvantage (minimise)
- Employment opportunity/recompense (enhance)
- Educational opportunity (including financial literacy) (enhance)
- Distribution of opportunity, income, wealth (avoid socially corrosive distribution (e.g. regions, population groups, rich/poor)
- Safety net (effectiveness)
- Contribution of sectors (community, private, public) (appropriateness)
- Inter-generational equity (inter-generational disadvantage, social inclusion)
- Overall societal wellbeing (impact of disparity)

Elements – Ethical

- Regulation and governance
- Standards (quality, safety)
- Influence of economic/financial pressure
(individuals not pressured to behave counter to individual or societal wellbeing)

7. Through diversity and innovation

Australians aspire to an economy that encourages diversity and innovation

Elements – affective leverage of:

- Industry diversity
- Innovation
- Entrepreneurship
- Research and development
- Capital support
- Technology
- Imports/exports

Elements – affective leverage of:

- Capital support
- Technology
- Imports/exports

8. International engagement

Australians aspire to an economy that engages with and leads the rest of the world, balancing foreign and national investment, and contributing to global wellbeing

Elements

- Balance of trade (exports/imports)
- Foreign aid (effectiveness, generosity)
- Migration (socially and economically sustainable)
- Global stability
- Economic reform (encouraged)
- Building of knowledge of other cultures (e.g. travel, language attainment)
- Foreign ownership (socially and economically beneficial)
- Building of competitiveness
- Leadership (promoting sustainable economic growth/development)

123

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

Aspirations for environmental progress

Australians aspire to healthy natural and built environments, which they connect to, effectively care for, and sustain for future generations.

Scope of the area of 'Environment' includes:

- Land
- Inland waters
- Oceans and estuaries
- Biodiversity
- Atmosphere
- Waste
- Built environments

Kinds of environments covered:

- Natural, including:
 - the many diverse local environments/regions/conditions in Australia
 - sentinel areas
 - unique areas or areas of cultural/historical/heritage significance
 - national – Australia as a land mass and associated territories
 - international – Australia as part of a global environmental context

Built, including:

- urban and rural built environments
- urban planning
- heritage buildings and built environments

Broad structure:

- i) How we think about and behave towards the environment
- ii) The way we want the environment to be
- iii) Other aspects of the environment

1. Connection

Australians aspire to greater awareness and valuing of, and connection to, the environment

Elements – Awareness	Elements – Connection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Awareness that we are interconnected with the environmentAwareness of human impact on the environment (lifestyles, behaviours, activities)Education about the environmentEnvironmental information and reporting (access, quality)Economic valuation/measurement of the environment (environmental accounts, unimproved land value/rents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Access to green space and natureLiveability of urban environmentsRespect for cultural/spiritual/historical/heritage significance of environment and environmental areasAboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to country (respected, emulated)Valuing the environment in its own right

2. Collaboration

Australians aspire to greater collaboration on environmental issues and actions

Elements

- Local/state/national
- Collaboration with traditional owners
- Coherence of information (scientific, public, media)
- International collaboration

3. Care and protection

Australians aspire to protect and minimise damage to the environment

<p>Elements – protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Condition of environment (damage)Pollution (greenhouse gases)Pest managementHeritage and sacred site protectionProtection of animals (discussion invited on best topic area to place this component)	<p>Elements – minimising damage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Environmental programs/services/ infrastructure (affordability, accessibility) (i.e. level of support for environmentally friendly human activity) including:Transport (public, private, proximity to centres, provision for bicycles/showers)Waste (recycling, composting toilets)Solar power (affordability, adaptability)Water tanks (affordability)
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125

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

4. Health and restoration

Australians aspire to a healthy environment, through restoration where needed

<p>Elements – health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Cleanness (air, water)Quality (water, soil, land)Safety (water, food, air, waste)Resilience (habitats)	<p>Elements – restoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">ReforestationSoil rehabilitationHeritage restorationAboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land rightsNatural habitats, green belts, corridors
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5. Sustainability

Australians aspire to use environmental resources sustainably and provide for future generations

<p>Elements – Areas needing to be sustainable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Natural resources (supply, sustainability)Energy (renewables/dependence on non-renewables, security)Food (supply, availability, quality, choice)Water (supply, availability, quality, choice)Population (sustainability)Biodiversity	<p>Elements – Issues and behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Climate changeEnvironmental technology (adaptability)Mitigation and adaption strategiesRecyclingBuilt environment (self-sustaining, environmentally friendly)
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6. Global interaction

Australians aspire to be responsible and leading global environmental citizens

Elements

- International collaboration (agreements, treaties)
- Environmental care and protection
- Environmental health and restoration
- Sustainable use of resources
- Climate change

Aspirations for governance progress

Australians aspire to a society where everyone is enabled to participate in decision making which affects their lives, and governance processes are trusted

Working definitions:

The area of 'Governance'	Refers to the systems, processes and institutions which govern, administer and regulate human activity, especially in respect of their impact on individual or societal wellbeing. It refers both to the way in which these arrangements operate (e.g. how they are managed), and their inclusion, in decision-making, of those whose lives may be affected (e.g. through consultation or representative processes).
Governance institutions	Refers to both government institutions and private entities (both defined below).
Government institutions	Such as parliament, the judiciary, the executive, government agencies, the public service
Private entities	Such as businesses, companies, lobby groups, community organisations, the media, universities and research organisations
Governance processes	Refers to legal, electoral/democratic, governmental processes and other processes or systems underlying public or private sector governance.

1. Participation in decision-making

Australians aspire to a society where everyone is enabled to participate in decision making which affects their lives

<p>Elements – Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Accessibility of governance processes (complexity, availability of information, encouragement to participate)Awareness / understanding of governance processes and ways of participatingPublic consultation (extent of, inclusiveness)Response to public inputFreedom of expression and association	<p>Elements – Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Active participation (engagement) in decision making (extent of, diversity of)Engagement in electoral processesPublic ability to influence decision makingIndividual responsibility (acknowledged, acted on)Public debate (level, quality)Local government (strength, empowerment)
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127

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

2. Equity and accountability

Australians aspire to governance processes that are equitable, and institutions and entities that are accountable

<p>Elements – Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fair and equitable treatment of all (discrimination, disparity in law/ constitution)Human rights, remedies and obligations (understood, upheld, protected)Elections (fair, free, accessible)Equity of legal protectionPeople feel protected by governanceSecular government (separation of church and state)Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/ non-Indigenous gaps (pace of improvement)	<p>Elements – Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Independence (corruption, favouritism, influence by power/money, conflict of interest)Public service independence (frankness, fearlessness)TransparencyComplaint and review mechanismsAccountability mechanisms (ombudsman)Trust/confidence in governance processes
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3. Effectiveness

Australians aspire to governance institutions and processes that are effective

Elements

- Inter-governmental coordination (collaboration; alignment; translation of decisions through federal/state/ local conditions; roles/responsibilities clear, stable)
- Coordination between public institutions and private entities
- Reduced complexity (services, processes, bureaucracy)
- Individual interactions with governance processes (quality, effectiveness)
- Resourcing (adequacy)
- Public law and order (effectiveness)
- Balance of protection and privacy
- Balance of freedom and accountability
- Trust in public and private entities
- People feel protected by governance

4. Media

Australians aspire to a media that is both free and accountable

Elements

- Diversity of media ownership
- Balanced reporting
- Media coverage of issues of national interest (accessibility, quality)
- Freedom of media to pursue truth/facts
- Accountability of media (privacy)
- Regulation of media (balance between freedom and accountability)

5. Human rights

Australians aspire to a society where human rights are understood and upheld

<p>Elements – Understanding of human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Human rights, remedies and obligations (understood, upheld, protected)Human rights education (access to information)People feel protected by rightsInternational human rights conventions and laws (understood, upheld, compliance)Balance between protection and intrusion by governmentRespect/observance of human rights and fundamental freedomsEquality of rights	<p>Elements – Human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Civil and politicalEconomic, social and cultural (religion, within bounds of Australian law)Children's rightsDiscrimination (women, racism, sexuality, disability, asylum seekers)Rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (traditional practices, constitution)
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129

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

6. Resilience

Australians aspire to governance institutions and processes that are stable but also adaptive and provide for future generations

<p>Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stability and robustness of governance systemsRelevance and adaptability of governance systemsResponsiveness of government to suggestions for changeAbility of legislation to reflect contemporary societal normsPlanning and review of governance processesSustainability of governance effectiveness



Appendix D – A selection of government department mission statements

Attorney-General's Department

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department serves the people of Australia by providing essential expert support to the Government in the maintenance and improvement of Australia's system of law and justice and its national security and emergency management systems.

The Department is the central policy and coordinating element of the Attorney-General's portfolio for which the Attorney-General and Minister for Home Affairs are responsible.

The mission of the Attorney-General's Department is achieving a just and secure society. In pursuing this mission, the Department works towards achieving three outcomes:

- An equitable and accessible system of federal civil justice.
- Coordinated federal criminal justice, security and emergency management activity, for a safer Australia.
- Assisting regions to manage their futures.

131

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's role is to develop and implement policies and programs that ensure Australia's agricultural, fisheries, food and forestry industries remain competitive, profitable and sustainable. Its policies and programs encourage and support sustainable natural resource use and management, protect the health and safety of plant and animal industries, and enable industries to adapt to compete in a fast-changing international and economic environment. They also help improve market access and market performance for the agricultural and food sector, encourage and assist industries to adopt new technology and practices, and assist primary producers and the food industry to develop business and marketing skills, and to be financially self-reliant.

Department of Broadband, Communications and Digital Economy

The Department focuses on transforming the structure of telecommunications, switching over to digital television and enhancing the broadcasting sector, realising the digital economy and enabling a good consumer experience.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

The Department is accountable to the Australian Government, Parliament and to the public and has the objectives:

- To educate and build socially inclusive communities where all Australians have the opportunity to reach their full potential and to actively participate in a rewarding economic and social life.
- To build and promote individual development through equitable and accessible education from early childhood services to skills training and higher education.
- To increase workforce participation and promote fair and productive work practices.
- To develop national economic potential and capability that builds future economic prosperity and international competitiveness through skills development and employment growth.
- To actively engage with clients and stakeholders to ensure services, advice and resources respond to the needs of these groups.
- To look for efficiencies and innovative, targeted and effective solutions in developing national economic potential.

- To provide children with access to culturally appropriate support, care and education throughout early childhood that will equip them for life and learning.
- To support students to acquire knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy and make successful transitions to further education, training and work.
- To establish world-class higher education and vocational education and training to allow people to become productive participants in the modern labour market.
- To promote a participative and inclusive society with access to a wide range of services and financial support to help with overcoming barriers, developing new skills and knowledge, to gain employment and participate in society.
- To support working arrangements where employers and employees can adopt flexible and modern arrangements that lead to mutually beneficial outcomes in Australian workplaces and for the economy.

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

The Department's purpose is to improve the lives of Australians by creating opportunities for economic and social participation by individuals, families and communities. FaHCSIA works closely with other government agencies, including Centrelink, to support the recovery of Australian individuals, families and communities following both domestic and international disasters. The focus of assistance is to enable people to re-establish their lives and communities. Assistance can take the form of individual and family ex-gratia payments and using existing community programs to contribute to strengthening local Australian communities.

FaHCSIA's objectives include:

- To close the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.
- To build a modern social and income support system.
- To provide better support and services for those in need.
- To deliver family policy that best fosters the development, wellbeing and safety of children.
- To reduce homelessness and make housing more affordable.
- To promote women's safety, economic security and participation.

Department of Finance and Deregulation

As a central agency of the Australian Government, the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) plays an important role in assisting government across a wide range of policy areas to ensure its outcomes are met, particularly with regard to expenditure and financial management, deregulation reform and the operations of government.

- Outcome 1 – Informed decisions on Government finances and continuous improvement in regulation making through: budgetary management and advice; transparent financial reporting; a robust financial framework; and best practice regulatory processes.
- Outcome 2 – Improved Government administration and operations through, systems, policy and advice on: procurement; Commonwealth property management and construction; government enterprises; risk management; and application of information and communications technology.
- Outcome 3 – Support for Parliamentarians, others with entitlements and organisations as approved by Government through the delivery of entitlements and targeted assistance.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Department's role involves working to strengthen Australia's security; enhancing Australia's prosperity; and helping Australian travellers and Australians overseas.

- Outcome 1: The advancement of Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign and trade policy priorities
- Outcome 2: The protection and welfare of Australians abroad and access to secure international travel documentation through timely and responsive travel advice and consular and passport services in Australia and overseas
- Outcome 3: A secure Australian Government presence overseas through the provision of security services and information and communications technology infrastructure, and the management of the Commonwealth's overseas owned estate

133

Department of Health and Ageing

The Department strives to support better health and active ageing for all Australians. The Department of Health and Ageing's objectives include:

- To reduce incidence of preventable mortality and morbidity in Australia.
- To create reliable, timely and affordable access to cost-effective medicines and Pharmaceutical Services.
- To create access to high quality and affordable aged care and carer support services.
- To create access to comprehensive, community based primary health care.
- To improve access to health services for people living in rural, regional and remote Australia.
- To improve hearing services to reduce incidence and consequence of hearing loss.
- To improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to help close the gap in life expectancy and child mortality rates.
- To ensure there is a choice in affordable, quality private health care services.
- To improve long-term capacity, quality and safety of Australia's health care system.
- To improve mental health and suicide prevention.
- To improve capacity, quality and mix of the health workforce.
- To create better access to public hospitals, acute care services and public dental services.
- To be well prepared to respond to national health emergencies and risks.

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

The purpose of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) is to 'enrich Australia through the well managed entry and settlement of people'. DIAC is committed to ensuring that it is open and accountable, deals fairly and reasonably with clients and has staff that are well trained and supported. The Department's key objectives, as set out in The DIAC Plan are:

- To manage the lawful and orderly entry and stay of people in Australia, including through effective border security.
- To promote a society which values Australian citizenship, appreciates cultural diversity and enables migrants to participate equitably.
- To contribute to Australia's prosperity and wellbeing through well managed migration.

- To respect human rights obligations towards refugees and asylum seekers and contribute to humanitarian policy internationally.
- To deliver high levels of compliance with Australia's migration and citizenship laws.
- To support migrants and refugees to settle in the community and participate in Australian society.
- To promote Australian citizenship and a multicultural Australia.
- To build a stronger migration, visa and citizenship service that is effective, efficient and better targeted to support Australia's migration programs and client needs.

Department of Infrastructure and Transport

The Department of Infrastructure and Transport contributes to the wellbeing of all Australians by assisting the Government to promote, evaluate, plan and invest in infrastructure and by fostering an efficient, sustainable, competitive, safe and secure transport system.

Its purpose is to promote economic, social and regional development by enhancing Australia's infrastructure and transport performance.

The Department of Infrastructure and Transport plays a key role in:

- Providing funding for transport infrastructure.
- Providing a framework for competition between and within transport modes.
- Promoting a transport system that is accessible, sustainable and environmentally responsible.
- Ensuring information about relevant Government policies and programs is disseminated effectively across Australia.

Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism

Key objectives of the Department include:

- Achieving strong economic growth.
- Creating resilient and secure energy systems.
- Ensuring equitable distribution of the benefits of Australia's energy, resources and tourism industries.
- Actively participating in a whole of government approach to domestic and international environmental policy.

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

The Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities develops and implements national policy, programs and legislation to protect and conserve Australia's environment and heritage.

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Prime Minister & Cabinet has unique responsibilities and a privileged role. Its principal function is to provide high-quality policy advice to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet on matters that are at the forefront of public and government administration, including domestic and international affairs and, in particular, the implications of proposals for Commonwealth-State relations. By looking over the horizon to the challenges and opportunities of the coming years, our high-level strategic advice further supports the government in taking all relevant factors into account to make the best possible decisions.

In line with the Prime Minister's expectations, PM&C is also assuming a stronger role in driving policy development and innovation and ensuring delivery of high-priority initiatives across the Australian Public Service, in pursuit of the government's objectives.

In addition to its work in policy advice, innovation, coordination and implementation, it is the role of the Department:

- To ensure that policy proposals put to the Prime Minister, other ministers in the portfolio, and to Cabinet are developed in a coherent, informed and coordinated fashion.
- Where appropriate, to coordinate and monitor implementation and delivery of Government decisions, policies and priorities, recognising that ministers are responsible individually for the administration of their departments and collectively for matters decided by Cabinet.
- To support the Prime Minister and the Government to manage the business of government in an efficient, effective and coordinated manner.
- To provide administrative support to the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary, the Cabinet and its committees.
- To coordinate and facilitate government administration, intergovernmental relations and communications with State and Territory Governments.

Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Department of Veterans' Affairs delivers government programs for war veterans, members of the Australian Defence Force, members of the Australian Federal Police and their dependants. The Department respects those who have served the nation and the members of the Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police. They uphold the values of the Australian Public Service in regards to integrity, honesty, fairness and openness which underpin their approach to achieve and maintain excellence in everything they do.

The Department reporting outcomes are:

- Maintain and enhance the financial wellbeing and self-sufficiency of eligible persons and their dependants through access to income support, compensation, and other support services, including advice and information about entitlements.
- Maintain and enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life of eligible persons and their dependants through health and other care services that promote early intervention, prevention and treatment, including advice and information about health service entitlements.
- Acknowledge and commemorate those who served Australia and its allies in wars, conflicts and peace operations through promoting recognition of service and sacrifice, preservation of Australia's wartime heritage, and official commemorations.



The Treasury

The Treasury focuses primarily on economic policy. The department is divided into four groups, Fiscal, Macroeconomic, Revenue and Markets, with support coming from the Corporate Services Group. These groups were established to meet four policy outcomes:

- Sound macroeconomic environment:

The Treasury monitors and assesses economic conditions and prospects, both in Australia and overseas, and provides advice on the formulation and implementation of effective macroeconomic policy, including monetary and fiscal policy, and labour market issues.

- Effective government spending and taxation arrangements:

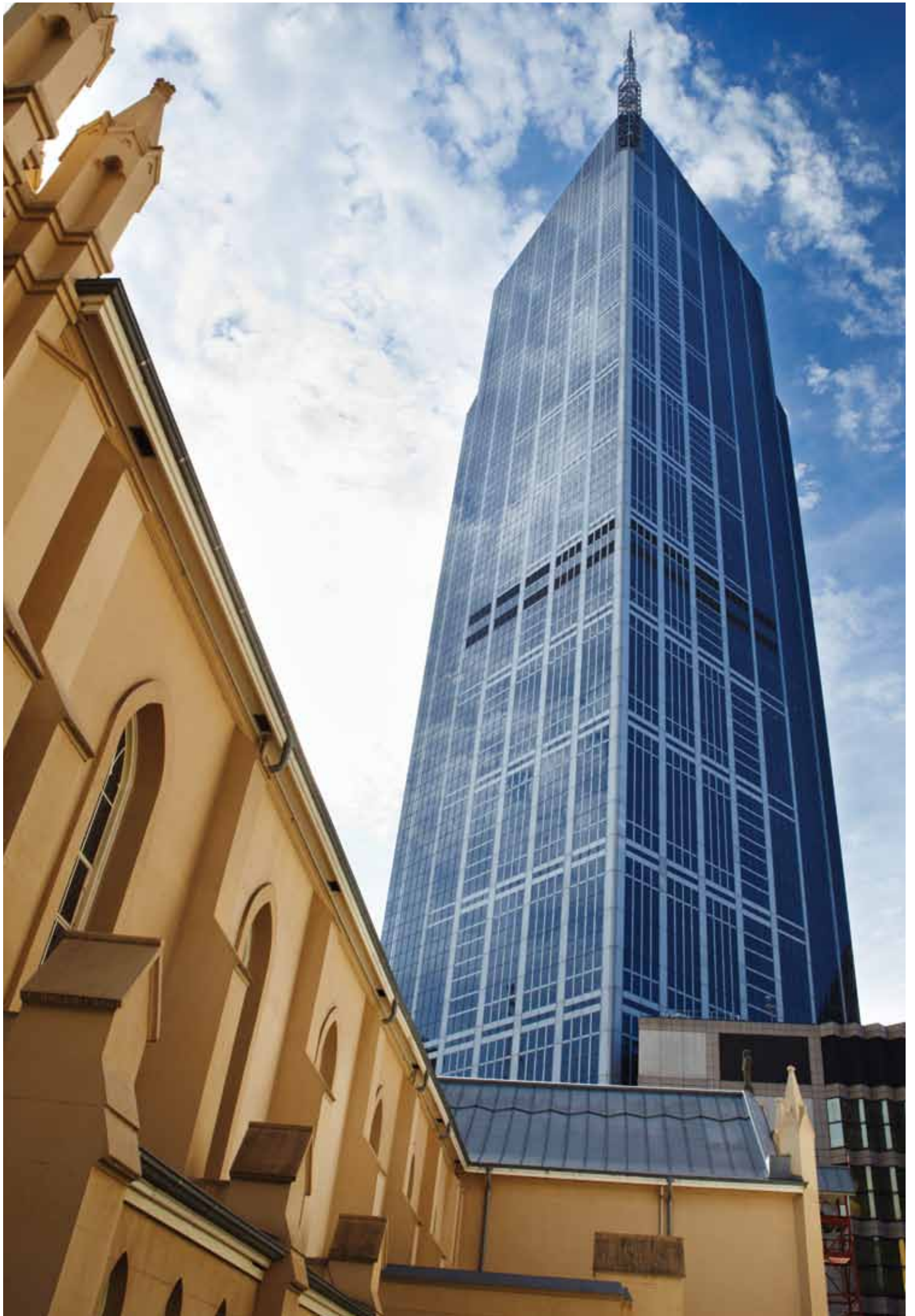
The Treasury provides advice on budget policy issues, trends in Commonwealth revenue and major fiscal and financial aggregates, major expenditure programmes, taxation policy, retirement income, Commonwealth-State financial policy and actuarial services.

- Effective taxation and retirement income arrangements:

The Treasury provides advice and assists in the formulation and implementation of government taxation and retirement income policies and legislation as well as providing information on material changes to taxation revenue forecasts and projections.

- Well-functioning markets:

The Treasury provides advice on policy processes and reforms that promote a secure financial system and sound corporate practices, remove impediments to competition in product and services markets and safeguard the public interest in matters such as consumer protection and foreign investment.



For more information

Measures of Australia's Progress

Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) presents a suite of statistical indicators to help Australians determine whether life in Australia is getting better.

<http://www.abs.gov.au/about/progress>

To find out the latest updated summary (MAP 2012) results see:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/1370.0.55.001>

To view the full and more comprehensive publication (MAP 2010) see:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/1370.0>

139

ABS Betaworks

Plans for a revamped MAP interface in 2013 can now be viewed in BetaWorks

<http://betaworks.abs.gov.au/betaworks/betaworks.nsf>

Feature Article

The MAP 2010 release included a Feature Article: Future directions in measuring Australia's progress, which set out the approach and rationale for the MAP consultation.

[http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/1370.0~2010~Chapter~Future%20directions%20%20\(7\)](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/1370.0~2010~Chapter~Future%20directions%20%20(7))

MEASURES OF
AUSTRALIA'S PROGRESS

ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR NATION:
A CONVERSATION WITH AUSTRALIANS
ABOUT PROGRESS

